



This is “Preface”, article 2 from the book [An Introduction to Organizational Communication \(index.html\)](#) (v. 0.0).

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# Preface

PLEASE NOTE: This book is currently in draft form; material is not final.

We know that choosing the appropriate textbook for your classroom is always a time consuming process. *Communication Within, Between, and Among Organizational Stakeholders: Theory, Research, and Practice for the 21st Century* will include a lot of content that is available in other books in addition to content not available at all in other organizational communication books on the market. We've also included a number of pedagogical features to the book to make the reading experience more meaningful.

The field of organizational communication has undergone an interesting history over the past century. Starting out as simple how-to manuals for business speaking and developing into the full-fledged discipline that it is today, organizational communication is a unique area of study with its own history, trends, and research methodologies. When selecting an organizational communication textbook, many professors struggle with finding a book that is theoretically strong, current, and relevant to their students. First, this book will examine both the historic and modern theories of organizational communication. While there are clear theory chapters ([Chapter 2 "Organizational Communication Ethics"](#) & [Chapter 3 "Classical Theories of Organizational Communication"](#)), the book will also incorporate other theories when examining various issues in the book. To make this book theoretically strong, we plan to include one chapter that examines the historic theories of organizational communication and one that examines modern theories of organizational communication. We believe that a strong theoretical foundation is important for any student studying organizational communication.

Second, this book will contain information about the history of the field while demonstrating the new ideas and avenues of research currently being undertaken. We believe that students should have a firm grasp of this history of the field, but they also need to know the current state of the field. Throughout the book we will examine the history behind concepts and then show how those concepts are currently being used in research.

Lastly, we want our book to be relevant to your students. One of the greatest challenges current professors have is teaching a generation of students more concerned with how knowledge will impact their lives than the process of learning. For this reason, we plan to incorporate our own personal anecdotes from working in various professions and used a variety of case studies from real organizations to help students see how the information contained within the book is actually exhibited within the real working environment. Furthermore, each chapter will end with a set of discussion/review questions that ask students to relate the content of the chapter in an applied manner.

In addition to being theoretically strong, current, and relevant to students, we will also incorporate three clear directions within this book: an international focus, communication ethics, and the interdisciplinary tradition of organizational communication. In a world where “multinational corporation” and “globalization” are commonplace, preparing individuals for interacting with others around the world in organizations is increasingly important. All three of the authors of this book have extensive international experience that includes living abroad and studying international business. Many of the anecdotes and case studies that will be included within this book use a very specific international focus to demonstrate how the book’s concepts can be applied to international organizational communication.

Second, we strongly believe that ethics is an extremely important part of the modern landscape of organizations. While some books include specific chapters examining ethics, we’ve decided to include issues of ethics at every turn in this book. Understanding how to be an ethical communicator in a modern organization is an extremely important reality in today’s business. To aid in this process, we will include boxes periodically in the book called “Communicating Ethically” to call attention to ethical issues related to a chapter’s content.

Lastly, our book will embrace the interdisciplinary tradition of organizational communication. While we strongly believe that communication scholars add a unique perspective to the discussion of organizational communication, we also realize that there are many scholars in industrial/organizational psychology, organizational behavior, and organizational sociology who have strongly impacted our view of organizational communication and continue to add to the discussion of organizational communication. While this is a book that first, and foremost, examines organizational communication, we believe it is necessary to include numerous variables that appear in modern organizational communication research, but have not made their way into other organizational communication textbooks (e.g., organizational justice, organizational citizenship, organizational charlatanism, etc.).

## Structure of the Book

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Chapter 1 "Introduction to Organizational Communication" of this book is designed to introduce you to the world of organizational communication. Specifically, this chapter provides definitions for both “organization” and “communication,” which is followed by a history of the field and an explanation of the three research traditions used in organizational communication.

Chapter 2 "Organizational Communication Ethics" & Chapter 3 "Classical Theories of Organizational Communication" will introduce you to the classic theories in organizational and the modern theories in organization. These two chapters demonstrate how the field has progressed historically in terms of perspectives on organizational structure and management.

Chapter 4 "Modern Theories of Organizational Communication" will be designed to introduce you to a very specific facet of organizations: culture & climate. This chapter is designed to demonstrate how organizations and organizational members co-create a sense of culture that permeates different organizations. The chapter also examines how scholars examine organizational culture and climate and the effects culture and climate have on organizational stakeholders.

Chapter 5 "Communicating Between and Among Internal Stakeholders" will examine how communication formally and informally occurs within organizations. Additionally, this chapter provides a brief introduction to the research practice of communication network analysis.

Chapter 6 "Organizational Communication Climate, Culture, and Globalization" & Chapter 7 "Leader and Follower Behaviors & Perspectives" will be designed to introduce you to the importance of leadership within an organization and various practices associated with leadership in the organization. Within these two chapters, readers are introduced to a wide range of theoretical positions on leadership while also examining effective leadership practices.

Chapter 8 "Organizational Identity and Diversity" will examines the role of the subordinate or follower in organizational communication. Specifically, this chapter

examines subordinate/follower traits, perceptions of supervisor/leaders, and perceptions of organizations.

Chapter 9 "Teams in the Workplace" through Chapter 14 "Stress, Conflict, and Negotiation" will examine how communication actually occurs within an organization. A variety of different facets related to organizational communication are examined in these chapters. Some of the concepts discussed can improve organizational communication and others are very destructive to organizational communication.

Lastly, Chapter 15 "The Dark Side of Organizational Communication" & Chapter 16 "Corporate Communications: Communicating with External Stakeholders" will examine how organizations interact and communicate with external stakeholders. Specifically, Chapter 15 "The Dark Side of Organizational Communication" examines the processes related to the field of corporate communications (public relations, marketing, sales, etc.) and Chapter 16 "Corporate Communications: Communicating with External Stakeholders" examines strategic communication (issue management, risk communication, and crisis communication).

Overall, these sixteen chapters are designed to give you a brief overview of the field of organizational communication. We sincerely hope that this book will be the first step you take in your journey into the world of organizational communication. We hope that you are able to avoid ethical pitfalls and strive for organizational communication that edifies individuals instead of tearing them down in the workplace. Remember, no organization is perfect because the people within an organization are never perfect. We cannot expect organizations to be perfect, but there's nothing wrong with striving for perfection.