PING Book Teaching Guide

Chapter 1: The PING Approach

Chapter Overview

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to virtual communication, and how popular media often oversimplifies its benefits and detriments. Communicating virtually isn't necessarily better or worse than communicating in person; rather, successfully employing it in professional interactions necessitates a different approach. The PING acronym, *Perspective taking, Initiative, Nonverbal*, and *Goals*, can better help readers to analyze and succeed in even the most challenging virtual interactions.

Topics Covered

- How workplace communication has evolved.
- The differences between virtual communication vs. remote work.
- Core characteristics of communication technologies.
- There is no "best" communication mode, but there are ways to determine the right mode for specific interactions.
- How to avoid approaching virtual communication mindlessly.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Chapter 1, students should be able to:
- Analyze the evolution of workplace communication:
    - Describe how virtual communication has changed the nature of work and workplace interactions.
    - Identify differences between virtual communication and remote work.
- Explain the basic characteristics regarding how communication technologies differ:
    - Distinguish between the characteristics of various communication modes (i.e., synchronicity, cue variety, and richness)
    - Describe why even small differences in characteristics can impact outcomes meaningfully.
- Understand the PING Approach:
    - Define the PING acronym—Perspective taking, Initiative, Nonverbal, and Goals.
    - Explain the significance of each element in evaluating virtual communication choices.
- Critique mindful vs. mindless virtual communication:
    - Assess the consequences of thoughtless approaches to virtual communication.

     ○ Discuss the importance of strategic decision-making in virtual communication, including considerations of communication mode and what is communicated in messages.

Comprehension Checks

- Describe the difference between remote work and virtual communication.
- Identify and describe the core characteristics that determine how communication media differ from one another.
- Define the PING approach and explain each of the four elements. Identify a situation where the PING approach could have improved a virtual communication outcome.

Discussion Prompts

- What do you think are the most promising/challenging aspects of virtual communication?
- Discuss a time when a virtual interaction didn't go the way you planned. What went wrong? What could you have done differently to improve the situation?
- Discuss a virtual communication interaction that went particularly well. Why do you think it was so successful?
- Discuss this quotation and its implications for employee productivity: "By one estimate, the average worker spends five hours a day on email and ninety minutes instant messaging." Brainstorm ways of making your workday virtual communication less of an interruption and more of an asset.
- Analyze the differences between virtual communication and remote work.

Activities

- Have students complete the Virtual Communication Styles Tool in the Appendix of the PING book and discuss their results in small groups.
- 'Can you hear me now' exercise
  - ○ Forray, Jeanie M., and Melissa J. Knott. "Can You Hear Me Now? The Communication Challenge." Management Teaching Review 6, no. 4 (2021): 350-360.
- With a partner, come up with a list of the 5 virtual communication tools you use most frequently. Discuss the pros and cons of each, and consider how they can both help and harm workplace interactions.

Supplemental Reading

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Chapter 2: How to Communicate More Productively

Chapter Overview

Chapter 2 delves into the strategic utilization of virtual communication to amplify, rather than hinder, workplace productivity. It challenges conventional approaches to virtual communication, such as multitasking. The chapter emphasizes selecting the optimal communication mode to maximize efficiency and resource utilization, guiding readers toward cultivating sustainable virtual communication habits. By learning how to resist reverting to mindless and outdated communication patterns, readers will be able to transform communication from an interruption into a tool for improving work efficiency.

Topics Covered

- How to effectively manage the multitude of virtual communication tools and messages to prevent loss of productivity.
- The substantial time and financial implications associated with meetings.
- Strategies for evaluating whether to employ email or conduct a meeting to enhance productivity.
- How to use virtual communication to brainstorm more effectively.
- How to restructure communication patterns to avoid errors and recovery time from task switching.
- How quickly to respond to virtual communication messages.
- The significance of open discussions about virtual communication preferences with both managers and subordinates.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Chapter 2, students should be able to:
- Establish a plan for effectively managing virtual communication:
  - Prevent a decline in productivity by adopting strategies to manage a multitude of messages effectively.
  - Implement time management techniques to restructure daily routines for minimizing errors and recovery time from task switching.
  - Reflect on personal experiences with virtual communication tools and identify areas for improvement.
- Evaluate email vs. meeting strategies for productivity:
  - Evaluate the cost effectiveness and necessity of meetings in a professional context.
  - Develop a decision-making framework for choosing between email communication and conducting meetings.
- Facilitate open discussions on communication preferences:

o   Engage in collaborative discussions with managers and subordinates to establish effective virtual communication practices within the workplace.

Comprehension Checks

- When interacting with people regularly via virtual communication, what does it mean to "make the implicit explicit"?
- Explain why it often isn't necessary to respond to incoming messages right away.
- If communication multitasking isn't the best approach, then what is the answer to becoming more productive?
- What are strategies for avoiding the temptation to check messages during non-communication work times?
- Aside from enhanced focus on work tasks, what are additional benefits of avoiding immediate message responses?
- If your goal is increased productivity, when should you choose synchronous modes? When should you choose asynchronous modes? What can you do to make each more efficient?

Discussion Prompts

- Reflect on a time when a meeting proved to be either highly productive or a significant time drain. What factors influenced its success or inefficiency? How can evaluating the cost-effectiveness and necessity of meetings benefit professional interactions?
- Consider scenarios in which choosing between email (or other types of text-communication, such as instant message) and meetings played a crucial role in productivity. How can a decision-making framework help in making these choices? Share insights on aligning communication modes with specific interactions for optimal outcomes.
- Share experiences of virtual brainstorming sessions. Which techniques proved effective in fostering creativity and collaboration? How can virtual communication be utilized to maximize the effectiveness of brainstorming?

Activities

- 'Puzzling in teams' exercise
    o   Crowne, Kerri Anne. "Puzzling in Teams: A Multipurpose Group Activity for Teamwork, Communication, Problem Solving, and Creativity." Management Teaching Review 4, no. 4 (2019): 306-316.
- With a partner, analyze your daily schedule and identify opportunities for restructuring to better align with virtual communication demands. Discuss potential improvements and strategies for increased efficiency.

Supplemental Reading

- Whillans, Ashley, Dave Feldman, and Damian Wisniewski. "The Psychology Behind Meeting Overload." Harvard Business Review, December 13, 2023. https://hbr.org/2021/11/the-psychology-behind-meeting-overload.
- Rogelberg, Steven G. "Why Your Meetings Stink—and What to Do About It." Harvard Business Review, November 25, 2020. https://hbr.org/2019/01/why-your-meetings-stink-and-what-to-do-about-it.
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- Rosen, Christopher C., Lauren S. Simon, Ravi S. Gajendran, Russell E. Johnson, Hun Whee Lee, and Szu-Han Joanna Lin. "Boxed in by your inbox: Implications of daily e-mail demands for managers' leadership behaviors." Journal of Applied Psychology 104, no. 1 (2019): 19.
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Chapter 3: How Your Communication Can Make You Seem More Effective

Chapter Overview

Chapter 3 explores the challenges of using virtual communication to demonstrate work performance to colleagues and supervisors. Given that many employees (even those in the office) are no longer always located within direct viewing distance of their supervisor, it has become necessary to manage impressions of how diligently individuals are working.

Topics Covered

- Why virtual impression management is so important.
- How to demonstrate high levels of engagement in work when one's managers can't directly observe it for themselves.
- How to manage other people's impressions via virtual communication.
- How to minimize the adverse effects of errors in virtual communication to leave a positive impression on recipients.
- How to take the efficiency-boosting strategies in Chapter 2 a step farther and strategically showcase productivity.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Chapter 3, students should be able to:
- Understand how to demonstrate engagement in virtual work environments:
  - Implement strategies to convey high levels of effort in one's work, especially when supervisors cannot directly observe these efforts.
- Understand the concept of input bias and apply it to enhance virtual communication practices.
  - Recognize how biases about work performance can influence perceptions and adjust communication accordingly.
- Manage virtual impressions effectively:
  - Identify ways of minimizing the negative impact of errors in written communication.
  - Recognize the impact of scheduling scarcity on the perception of one's availability and commitment.
- Identify the benefits and challenges of cameras-on video interactions:
  - Learn how to minimize the potential drawbacks of cameras-on interactions.
  - Understand how to utilize appropriate nonverbal cues and enhance one's visual presence in video interactions.

- Reflect on how to align virtual communication with tangible deliverables and outcomes to build trust and credibility in professional settings.

Comprehension Checks

- What is the input bias, and how should it impact one's virtual communication practices?
- Why is it sometimes beneficial to provide a limited schedule when arranging a meeting?
- What is "productivity theater," and why is it a necessary consideration in many current workplace interactions?
- What are the benefits of video when a person's goal is to demonstrate engagement and diligence?
- What are the challenges of cameras-on video interactions, and how can they be resolved?

Discussion Prompts

- Reflect on a time when you had to demonstrate your engagement in virtual work. What strategies did you use, and how effective were they? Looking back, are there any changes you could have made to your communication to demonstrate your effort more clearly?
- If you were a manager, how would you avoid the need for your employees to engage in "productivity theatre"?
- Discuss how assumptions about work output can influence perceptions in virtual communication. How might you adjust your communication accordingly?
- Share experiences of how you actively shape how others perceive you through virtual communication.
- Consider specific challenges you have faced when managing impressions during cameras-on video interactions. What steps could you have taken to minimize these issues? How can appropriate nonverbal cues enhance your visual presence?

Activities

- 'Communication audit exercise'
  - Bailey-Hughes, Brenda. "A communication audit exercise to enhance virtual team and individual communication skills." Management Teaching Review 6, no. 4 (2021): 298-308.
- Select a work-related task and formulate a virtual communication plan that aligns evidence of hard work with tangible deliverables. Present your plan, engage in discussions about potential challenges, and receive feedback from peers.
- Apply the PING framework to a work situation you experienced that includes some of the concepts in this chapter. Explain how each element of the framework contributes to demonstrating effort and managing productivity impressions when communicating virtually.

Supplemental Reading

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Chapter 4: How to Start Relationships Virtually

Chapter Overview

Chapter 4 examines how to initiate new relationships in virtual contexts. It can often feel strange to begin conversations with strangers or acquaintances when there's a lack of physical proximity, but there are ways to use communication technologies to create—and maintain—relationships virtually.

Topics Covered

- Why it is valuable to take the initiative to start new relationships virtually.
- How self-consciousness impacts the establishment of authentic connections in virtual relationships.
- How advice-seeking, when properly utilized, can initiate and strengthen relationships.
- How to appropriately use each virtual communication mode to begin and strengthen relationships.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Chapter 4, students should be able to:
- Analyze the impact of the spotlight effect on individuals' behavior and apply this understanding to virtual relationship-building:
  - Examine the potential impact of heightened self-awareness on behavior in virtual interactions.
  - Develop strategies for mitigating the negative effects of the spotlight effect and fostering more authentic connections online.
- Evaluate the nature of asking for advice as a relationship initiation and building tool.
  - Reflect on the types of advice that are likely to improve relationships and perceptions of the advice-asker's competence.
- Differentiate between the most suitable communication modes when initiating relationships:
  - Identify whether email, audio, or video is ideal for specific scenarios, considering the nuances of each mode and their impact on relationship initiation.
- Demonstrate an understanding of when perspective taking becomes crucial in virtual relationship-building:
  - Describe the role of perspective taking in fostering effective communication and connection.

Comprehension Checks

- What is the spotlight effect, and how does it influence people's behavior?

- Why can asking for advice actually make an individual appear more, rather than less, competent?
- At which stage in a relationship is it most useful to choose cameras-on video meetings?
- When are audio interactions the best choice for relationship-building?
- Why is perspective taking especially important when a person is considering whether to reach out to someone they've fallen out of touch with?

Discussion Prompts

- Consider how to reframe thought processes such as "It would be too weird to email a new contact."
- Discuss how to most effectively leverage advice-asking to build relationships, signal a desire to learn, and increase impressions of your competence.
- Discuss the pros and cons of using email, audio, and video interactions when reaching out to an acquaintance. Describe specific situations that would be ideal for each of the three modes, and explain your reasoning behind each.

Activities

- 'Networking menu' exercise
  - McCauley, Kelly Davis. "The Networking "Menu": Fostering Student Networking in Online Management Courses." Management Teaching Review 9, no. 1 (2024): 67-81.
- Recall a specific instance in which the spotlight effect had a detrimental impact on one of your virtual interactions. Generate a list of strategies to mentally reframe the situation, envisioning potential positive outcomes. Collaborate with a partner to expand the pool of solutions, offering mutual insights and alternative perspectives for improvement.
- Consider one stranger you would like to connect with, and one person with whom you've lost touch and would like to reconnect. Craft a thoughtful message expressing your desire to (re)establish a connection. The decision to send the message is yours to make.

Supplemental Reading

- Kuwabara, Ko, Jiyin Cao, Soomin Sophie Cho, and Paul Ingram. "How to Build a Broader Network Within Your Company." Harvard Business Review, March 6, 2024. https://hbr.org/2024/03/how-to-build-a-broader-network-within-your-company.
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- Grant, Adam M., and Justin M. Berg. "Prosocial motivation at work: When, why, and how making a difference makes a difference." (2011).

Chapter 5: How to Present Your Most Authentic and Likeable Self

Chapter Overview

Chapter 5 delves into the crucial aspects of being perceived as both likeable and authentic for success in virtual communication. This chapter emphasizes how to use the relational component of impression management to optimize outcomes in virtual interactions.

Topics Covered

- How to maintain a sense of humanity in virtual communication.
- How to ensure accurate reception of one's intended relational goals in virtual interactions.
- How to choose the right communication mode to convey authenticity in various situations.
- Understand the Pratfall Effect and how making non-competency-related errors enhances perceptions of authenticity and warmth.
- Why there isn't one "optimal" communication mode and how defining one's interaction goals can change the approach.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Chapter 5, students should be able to:
- Recognize and implement strategies for infusing humanity into virtual communication:
    - Articulate the challenges of authentically conveying emotions in virtual interactions.
    - Devise techniques to nurture a human touch in digital interactions, overcoming virtual barriers to emotional expression.
- Evaluate and optimize goal-driven communication in virtual interactions:
    - Identify the significance of defining interaction goals for successful virtual communication.
    - Recognize how to choose communication modes for productivity versus relationship-based goals.
- Understand and apply the Pratfall Effect in virtual communication:
    - Reflect on situations where non-competency-related errors can enhance authenticity in virtual interactions.
- Analyze emotional leakage and mitigate its impact:
    - Define emotional leakage and comprehend its problematic nature in virtual communication.
    - Devise strategies to reduce emotional leakage and ensure intended emotions are effectively communicated.

- Explore the role of perspective taking in authentically conveying emotions:
  - Apply perspective taking techniques to enhance emotional expression and understanding in digital interactions.

Comprehension Checks

- Why is it more difficult to authentically convey emotions virtually?
- What is emotional leakage, and why is it problematic?
- Which communication mode is seen as the most (and least) authentic?
- If a person is trying to convey emotions that are different from the ones they're actually feeling, which mode is best?
- Why can making errors sometimes be helpful in virtual communication?
- What is "surface acting," and which communication mode should an individual use while engaging in it?

Discussion Prompts

- If you had to relay bad (or good) news to someone, which mode would you choose and how would you do it? Would your answer change if the person was someone closer to you? Why?
- Discuss the pros and cons of using email, audio, and video to convey authenticity. What are the particular challenges of each mode? How can those challenges be mitigated or avoided?
- Discuss a time when you unintentionally leaked emotions during a conversation. How did it impact the other person's perceptions of you? What steps could you have taken to reduce emotional leakage and/or convey your intended emotions?
- Create a list of interactions for which it might make sense to choose text-based communication over a higher-richness mode. How would you ensure your intended emotions are accurately relayed to your communication partner?

Activities

- 'Bad news email exercise'
  - Springer, Scott, and Ann Springer. "Crafting a Bad News Email: An Exercise in Managerial Communication." Management Teaching Review 9, no. 1 (2024): 55-66.
- Brainstorm a list of challenging interpersonal interactions you're likely to face in your job. Choose one, and then come up with a plan for using virtual communication to ensure you convey the emotions and message you intend. Share with a partner and consider any additions or improvements you might be able to make.
- Imagine a scenario where you must convey difficult feedback to a subordinate or coworker. Develop a thoughtful plan for delivering the information authentically and compassionately. Highlight the role of perspective taking in your strategy, and consider how understanding their viewpoint contributes to a more empathetic communication approach.

Supplemental Reading

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Chapter 6: How to Build Trust and Foster Long-Lasting Virtual Relationships

Chapter Overview

Chapter 6 examines the critical role of trust in building and sustaining virtual relationships. It explores the challenges posed by virtual interactions in diminishing spontaneous workplace connections, but also highlights the opportunities to maintain relationships unbound by geographical constraints and time zone disparities. This chapter provides insights into moving beyond robotic communication, further emphasizing the human aspect in virtual interactions, and leveraging strategies to establish trustworthiness.

Topics Covered

- How to form lasting trust via virtual communication.
- How virtual communication has both diminished the occurrence of spontaneous workplace interactions and concurrently enabled the cultivation of relationships unhindered by geographical constraints or time zone disparities.
- How to use virtual communication to establish stronger relationship bonds.
- How over- versus under-communicating impacts trust.
- How to leverage video backgrounds to effectively communicate and shape perceptions of warmth and competence in virtual interactions.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Chapter 6, students should be able to:
- Identify key factors that contribute to building trust in virtual interactions:
  - Apply strategies to establish and maintain trust in various virtual communication scenarios.
- Explore ways to recreate informal and spontaneous connections in a virtual work environment:
  - Develop strategies to foster team cohesion and camaraderie despite the absence of physical proximity.
- Implement techniques to infuse humanity into virtual communication:
  - Understand how choices about mode and message can humanize virtual interactions.
  - Practice incorporating warmth and empathy into written and verbal communication in virtual settings.
- Identify ways in which virtual communication choices can inadvertently harm trust and relationship-building:

o Develop a blueprint for overcoming the most common virtual communication pitfalls that can lead to a loss of trust.

Comprehension Checks

- What is schmoozing, and how can it enhance feelings of trust in virtual interactions?
- Explain the *identifiable victim effect* and how it can be used to make virtual interactions feel more personal.
- Why is it important to self-disclose to build trust in virtual interactions?
- In addition to sharing details about oneself, what other important step should a person take to enhance trust and perceptions of warmth?
- Which nonverbal behaviors can increase feelings of trust?
- When a response isn't explicitly required, why can it be advantageous to send a proactive follow up?
- How can an individual's video background influence other people's perceptions of their trustworthiness?

Discussion Prompts

- What makes trust harder to establish in virtual interactions?
- How can you reignite spontaneous "watercooler" conversations with colleagues when you communicate primary via virtual modes?
- Describe the benefits of mimicry in virtual interactions and how to use it most effectively.
- Describe the potential hazards of CC'ing and reply-all, and how to avoid these pitfalls.
- Consider an upcoming high-stakes virtual interaction you have planned, and list the ways you can use nonverbal behaviors to enhance feelings of trust and familiarity.

Activities

- Have students (without knowing the purpose of the exercise) rate how well they know each of their classmates. Then pair the students with someone they know least well, with the goal of building as much trust as they can within 5 minutes. Then, repeat the exercise two more times by pairing students with other [not well-known] partners. Have students vote for which of their three partners they trusted the most. Students with the most votes "win." Discuss what worked and didn't work.
- Initiate a video background design challenge where participants create backgrounds that convey trust, warmth, and professionalism either via their "real" backgrounds or "virtual" images that hide their actual background (and for fun, consider a secondary competition for the worst background that others would not think they chose with the intentional purpose of being bad— with some guidelines, of course). Participants should present their chosen backgrounds, explaining the intended impressions and emotional impact. Encourage feedback from peers.
- Consider an upcoming situation where it will be important to build trust virtually. Apply the PING framework to the concepts in this chapter to determine your approach to the interaction.

Explain how each element of the framework contributes to building trust and fostering long-term relationships when communicating virtually.

Supplemental Reading

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Chapter 7: How to Effectively Manage Digital Conflicts and Emotions

Chapter Overview

Chapter 7 dives into the intricate dynamics of managing conflicts and emotions in the realm of virtual communication. Recognizing that digital interactions can be as emotionally impactful as face-to-face encounters, this chapter explores the challenges of ensuring intended emotions are accurately conveyed and the potential consequences of emotional misinterpretation.

Topics Covered

- Why it can be harder to ensure one's emotions come across as intended in virtual contexts, and the implications of emotional misinterpretation.
- How emojis can lead to miscommunication.
- How confidence in the ability to accurately relay what a person intends virtually is often unfounded.
- How to anticipate the ways virtual communication might elicit unintended reactions, and how to avoid the most common errors.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Chapter 7, students should be able to:
- Recognize the pivotal role of tone in virtual miscommunication:
  - Explain how the absence of nonverbal cues impacts tone interpretation.
  - Explore the potential consequences of misinterpreting tone in virtual interactions.
- Identify strategies for ensuring accurate emotional expression in written communication:
  - Identify potential pitfalls that may hinder accurate emotional expression and propose remedies.
  - Analyze the benefits and detriments to each mode for accurately conveying emotions.
- Understand how goals determine the most appropriate virtual communication mode to use:
  - Evaluate the effectiveness of email compared to richer communication modes in negotiation scenarios.
  - Analyze how aligning communication goals with the appropriate mode enhances overall effectiveness.

Comprehension Checks

- What role does tone (intended and interpreted) play in miscommunication, particularly with low-rich communication media?

- List the strategies for ensuring one's emotions are coming across as intended in written communication.
- What are the neutrality and negativity effects, and how do they contribute to virtual miscommunication?
- Describe the difference between perspective taking and empathy, and explain why the former leads to reaching one's goals more effectively than the latter.
- What is the egocentric bias, and how does it contribute to virtual miscommunication?
- What should an individual consider before including emojis in their virtual communication to avoid misinterpretations?
- Why is email often less successful than richer modes in reaching negotiation deals? When are specific situations when email is the best choice?

Discussion Prompts

- Recall a situation when either you or someone else exhibited overconfidence that their virtual communication would be accurately interpreted, only to later discover a misunderstanding. Detail the circumstances, unfolding events, and the eventual realization of misinterpretation. Describe potential alternative actions that could have been taken by either party to clarify their respective positions and avoid the communication breakdown.
- Discuss the pros and cons of each virtual communication mode when conveying emotions. Identify specific situations when "leaner" media would be best, and when you should choose richer modes.
- Consider instances when you might be able to use virtual emotion contagion to have a positive impact, either in your workplace or on a broader scale. How would you craft the message to invoke emotion contagion and ensure a constructive ripple effect, without the risk of going viral for the wrong reasons?

Activities

- Reflect on personal experiences or observed instances of emotional miscommunication in the workplace. Students will identify the specific strategies discussed in Chapter 7 that could have mitigated or prevented the miscommunication. Share insights in a group discussion, encouraging students to learn from real-world examples and apply theoretical knowledge.
- Ask students to envision themselves as a business owner deeply immersed in a tense email negotiation with a key vendor. Emotions are running high, and each student's hypothetical negotiation partner has just dropped the bombshell that they are withdrawing from the deal, citing an unwillingness to collaborate with the student. Their task is to compose an email response aimed at tempering emotions and steering everyone back toward a cooperative mindset. In a separate analysis, identify and explain the specific strategies from Chapter 7 that students employed in their email and their rationale behind their effectiveness. Exchange responses with a peer for constructive feedback.

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Chapter 8: How to Use Communication Technologies to Reduce Stereotypes and Biases

Chapter Overview

Chapter 8 addresses the profound impact of virtual communication on biases, stereotypes, and inclusion. It explores strategies to leverage virtual communication for fostering inclusivity. This chapter navigates the selection of communication modes to minimize biases and emphasizes building inclusive virtual interactions.

Topics Covered

- How virtual communication impacts biases and stereotypes.
- How to use virtual communication to help make others feel more included.
- Which communication mode to choose to reduce the potential of biases.
- How to use a virtual communication toolkit to enhance inclusivity and accessibility for others.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Chapter 8, students should be able to:
- Analyze the dual role of virtual communication in ameliorating and exacerbating biases:
  - Consider how cultural differences, language nuances, and individual perspectives contribute to bias in virtual interactions.
- Identify the components of a virtual work environment that prioritize inclusion and equity:
  - Identify accessible communication strategies that cater to diverse needs within a virtual team.
  - Evaluate the impact of these features on promoting equity and diversity.
- Understand which communication modes should be utilized in various situations to reduce bias:
  - Differentiate between low-rich and high-rich modes for bias reduction.
  - Justify mode selection based on the nuances of the communication context.
- Identify factors that can result in the need to communicate differently:
  - Explore how changes in team composition, project complexity, or external factors may require adjustments in communication approaches.
  - Recognize the need for a dynamic approach to effective virtual communication in diverse contexts.

Comprehension Checks

- Identify ways in which virtual communication can lead to incorrect assumptions about interaction partners' backgrounds and viewpoints.

- What is the "illusion of understanding," and how does it impact virtual miscommunication? What steps can be taken to reduce its negative impact?
- Describe the ways in which virtual communication can be used to reduce stereotypes and biases.
- When the goal is to reduce biases, which questions should a person ask themselves to identify the most appropriate communication mode?
- What is the impact of virtual communication errors when communicating with someone from a different culture?
- What is the *fundamental attribution error*, and how does it impact the way individuals judge other people's virtual communication? What steps can be taken to avoid misattributions?
- How can perspective taking be employed to reduce the impact of stereotypes and biases, particularly in low-rich virtual communication?

Discussion Prompts

- In your experience, does virtual communication act as a "great equalizer" or worsen stereotypes? Provide specific examples to support your response.
- What steps could be taken in your workplace virtual communication to improve inclusion?
- Recall a particularly inclusive work environment during your career. What made it such a safe work space? How was virtual communication utilized to reduce stereotypes and increase feelings of inclusivity? How could these strategies be implemented in other workplaces to reduce stereotyping and improve culture?

Activities

- 'HatPack' exercise
  - Fodness, Dale, and Greg Bell. "The HatPack: An Experiential Exercise for Enhancing Class Discussion Through Perspective Taking and Structured Controversy." Management Teaching Review 8, no. 3 (2023): 215-232.
- 'Who's on first' exercise (note: adapt to initiate a conversation about misunderstanding what one person is trying to say versus what another hears)
  - Julien, Mark, Russell Clayton, and Micheal Stratton. "Who's on first: A resource on workplace communication." Management Teaching Review 6, no. 4 (2021): 383-391.
- Apply the PING framework to a complicated work interaction in which stereotyping was a factor that either students or a peer experienced. Analyze how each element of the framework could have been employed to mitigate biases and enhance communication.

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Chapter 9: How to Thrive in a Digital World

Chapter Overview

Chapter 9 delves into the challenges posed by the omnipresence of virtual communication, exploring strategies to strike a balance between productivity and recovery time in a digitally connected world. It addresses the potential pitfalls of constant connectivity, provides insights on preventing work from encroaching on personal time, and offers guidance on building habits that align with life goals.

Topics Covered

- How the ubiquity of virtual communication makes it difficult to balance productivity and recovery time.
- How to prevent virtual communication from monopolizing a person's time.
- How to make meetings feel less exhausting and emotionally depleting.
- How to establish boundaries between work and home.
- How to use time away from work to rejuvenate.
- How to build virtual communication habits that meet one's life goals.
- The role of confidence in work communication outcomes.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Chapter 9, students should be able to:
- Reflect on how constant connection reduces individuals' ability to disconnect:
  - Analyze how virtual communication can be employed to thrive in a virtual world.
  - Assess the impact of purposeful disconnection on overall productivity and satisfaction.
- Understand the potential downsides of scheduling autonomy and identify mitigation strategies:
  - Comprehend the curvilinear effect of after-hours work communication on social capital development and emotional exhaustion.
  - Formulate strategies to balance after-hours communication for optimal social capital and emotional well-being.
- Evaluate the preference for low- or high-richness modes when engaging in work-related communication:
  - Evaluate the emotional impact of different communication modes in virtual interactions.
- Utilize steps outside of work time to foster rejuvenation:
  - Formulate personalized strategies for detaching from work during non-working hours.
- Understand the role of confidence and self-efficacy in work performance and overall well-being:
  - Evaluate the role of self-efficacy in shaping attitudes and behaviors in virtual communication.

Comprehension Checks

- What are potential downsides of scheduling autonomy, and how can they be mitigated?
- What is the *autonomy paradox*, and how does it contribute to a blurring between work communication and time spent recovering?
- Explain the curvilinear effect of after-hours work communication with regard to social capital development and emotional exhaustion.
- When engaging in work-related communication after hours, are low- or high-richness modes preferable? Why?
- Describe the "weekend vacation" effect, and explain how it contributes to rejuvenation.
- What are the benefits of having a virtual communication "off" period at the end of one's work day?
- What are the most effective behaviors for detaching from work?
- Explain the role confidence and self-efficacy plays in work performance and overall wellbeing.

Discussion Prompts

- In your personal experience, what are some of the greatest roadblocks to thriving in a world of near-constant connectivity? Which strategies from Chapter 9 could be most helpful in overcoming these challenges?
- With a partner, generate a list of circumstances in which it would be appropriate to reach out to your manager or subordinate after work hours. Consider how you might word your message for each scenario to set expectations for response time and prevent emotional exhaustion for both parties.
- Share your experiences about the most successful activities, mindsets, or practices that have helped you disconnect from work. Discuss in small groups.
- Reflect on Sabine Sonnetag's research, identifying the four types of detachment. Generate two strategies for incorporating each detachment type into your personal life.

Activities

- Complete a self-analysis of your current balance between work connectivity and time spent rejuvenating. Is there a clear distinction between work and nonwork time, or is there too much blurring between the two? If you're happy with the current balance, what can you do to ensure you maintain your habits? If you're unhappy with the current balance, what changes could you make to even the scales?
- Collaborate with a partner to anticipate upcoming changes in virtual communication technology and practices over the next five years. Discuss proactive steps you could take to successfully apply the principles from this book to navigate these evolving scenarios.
- Generate a set of conversation starters to set expectations for after-hours communication with your manager. Engage in a role-playing exercise with a partner and simulate the conversation. Afterward, engage in a reflective discussion.

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