

# Contents

Preface	ix
1. Communicating With Strangers	1
An Overview of the Communication Process	7
<i>Symbols and Messages</i>	8
<i>Messages and Meanings</i>	9
<i>Sources of Communication Behavior</i>	10
<i>Self-Concept and Communication</i>	14
<i>Communicative Predictions</i>	15
Managing Uncertainty and Anxiety	18
<i>Uncertainty</i>	18
<i>Anxiety</i>	21
Effective Communication	25
<i>Effective Communication Defined</i>	25
<i>Why Misinterpretations Occur</i>	26
<i>Recognizing Our Unconscious Interpretations</i>	29
<i>Mindfulness</i>	30

2. Understanding Group Differences	35
Culture	35
<i>Defining Culture</i>	36
<i>Norms and Rules</i>	37
<i>Cultures and Subcultures</i>	38
How Cultures Differ	39
<i>Individualism-Collectivism</i>	40
<i>Low- and High-Context Communication</i>	44
<i>Uncertainty Avoidance</i>	45
<i>Power Distance</i>	46
<i>Masculinity-Femininity</i>	48
Cultural Identity	48
<i>Strength of Cultural Identity</i>	49
<i>Individualistic and Collectivistic Orientations</i>	49
Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity	52
<i>Ethnic Identity in the United States</i>	54
<i>Language and Ethnic Identity</i>	56
<i>Strength of Ethnic Identity</i>	60
Identities Based on Gender, Disability, Age, and Social Class	61
<i>Gender</i>	62
<i>Disability</i>	63
<i>Age</i>	66
<i>Social Class</i>	68
3. Our Expectations of Strangers	73
The Nature of Expectations	74
<i>Expectations Are Culturally Based</i>	74
<i>Evaluating Violations of Our Expectations</i>	75
<i>Negative Intergroup Expectations</i>	76
Intergroup Attitudes	77
<i>Ethnocentrism</i>	77
<i>Prejudice</i>	82
<i>Sexism</i>	86
<i>Ageism</i>	88
Stereotypes	89
<i>Stereotypes and Communication</i>	91
<i>Accuracy of Predictions Based on Stereotypes</i>	94
<i>Stereotypes and Communication Breakdowns</i>	96
<i>Assessing Your Stereotypes</i>	97
Changing Our Intergroup Expectations	97
<i>Change in Attitudes Toward the Group as a Whole</i>	100
<i>Increased Complexity of Intergroup Perceptions</i>	101
<i>Decategorization</i>	101
Ethical Issues in Communicating With Strangers	102
<i>Moral Relativism</i>	102
<i>Dignity and Integrity</i>	104
<i>Moral Inclusion-Exclusion</i>	106

4. Attributing Meaning to Strangers' Behavior	110
The Perception Process	111
<i>Perceptions Are Selective</i>	111
<i>Perceptions Involve Categorizations</i>	112
<i>Rigid Categories Inhibit Accurate Perceptions</i>	113
The Attribution Process	115
<i>Individual Attributions</i>	115
<i>Social Attributions</i>	117
<i>The Ultimate Attribution Error</i>	118
Personality Factors Influencing Our Attributions	119
<i>Category Width</i>	119
<i>Uncertainty Orientation</i>	121
Culture and Misattributions	124
<i>Individualism-Collectivism</i>	125
<i>Low- and High-Context Communication</i>	127
Improving the Accuracy of Our Attributions	129
<i>Perception Checking</i>	129
<i>Listening Effectively</i>	131
<i>Feedback</i>	135
5. Exchanging Messages With Strangers	138
Cultural Differences in Language Usage	139
<i>Beliefs About Talk and Silence</i>	139
<i>Direct Versus Indirect Language Usage</i>	142
<i>Topic Management and Turn Taking in Conversations</i>	145
<i>Persuasive Strategies</i>	146
Language Usage in Communicating With Strangers	147
<i>Language Attitudes</i>	148
<i>Second-Language Competence</i>	149
<i>Communication Accommodation</i>	151
<i>Code Switching</i>	152
Improving the Quality of Our Messages	153
<i>Being Assertive, Not Aggressive</i>	153
<i>Being Confirming</i>	156
<i>Creating Inclusive Messages</i>	157
6. Being Perceived as a Competent Communicator	159
Defining Perceived Competence	159
<i>Competence as Impressions</i>	160
<i>Components of Competence</i>	162
Motivation	163
<i>Need for Predictability</i>	164
<i>Need to Avoid Diffuse Anxiety</i>	165
<i>Need to Sustain Our Self-Conceptions</i>	166
<i>Approach-Avoidance Tendencies</i>	167
Knowledge	168
<i>Knowledge of How to Gather Information</i>	169
<i>Knowledge of Group Differences</i>	173

	<i>Knowledge of Personal Similarities</i>	176
	<i>Knowledge of Alternative Interpretations</i>	177
	<b>Skills</b>	179
	<i>Ability to Be Mindful</i>	179
	<i>Ability to Tolerate Ambiguity</i>	181
	<i>Ability to Manage Anxiety</i>	183
	<i>Ability to Empathize</i>	184
	<i>Ability to Adapt</i>	185
	<i>Ability to Make Accurate Predictions and Explanations</i>	191
<b>7.</b>	<b>Applying Our Knowledge and Skills</b>	<b>196</b>
	<b>Managing Conflict</b>	197
	<i>Cultural and Ethnic Differences in Conflict</i>	197
	<i>Assessing How You Manage Conflict</i>	200
	<i>Managing Intergroup Conflict</i>	200
	<b>Developing Relationships</b>	207
	<i>Similarities and Differences Across Groups</i>	207
	<i>Intergroup Relationships</i>	210
	<b>Building Community</b>	221
	<i>The Nature of Community</i>	222
	<i>Principles of Community Building</i>	224
	<b>References</b>	231
	<b>Name Index</b>	248
	<b>Subject Index</b>	251
	<b>About the Author</b>	255