

Free essay on interpersonal communication

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Fundamentals of interpersonal communication

Interpersonal communication involves the passing on of messages between two individuals or a small group of people who are in close contact with one another (DeVito, 2012). The individuals in the communication process usually send messages rather than meanings. The individual receiving the message interprets it to meaning before responding appropriately.

Perception is key determinant in message interpretation. Perception involves the manner in which different individuals familiarize themselves with the environment around them which include the individuals they are communicating with (DeVito, 2012). Perception can either negatively or positively influence interpersonal communication depending on the manner of perception.

Primacy and recency is an element of perception that influences interpersonal communication in a negative manner. Primacy is an instance where an individual gives importance to the elements of the communication process that he perceives at the initial stages of the communication process. Recency is ascribing importance to what comes last in a communication process (DeVito, 2012). These characteristic tends to distort the actual meaning intended in a particular communication process. For instance while conversing with a student two years my junior; I gave a very lame definition of linguistics assuming that the student was not mature enough in the course to understand a more concrete definition. It is only later that I realized that instead of saying “Linguistics is simply the study of languages”, I should have instead said “Linguistics involves studying human languages

scientifically, which incorporates studying content, meaning, context and form of human languages.” The first statement can be referred to as an inference based on the perception that the receiver of that message could do with a simple definition. The second definition is rather a concrete fact and that which can be understood better.

In conclusion, it is always advisable that individuals in a communication process avoid perceptions and instead concentrate on the message being relayed to avoid misinterpretations and to enrich the communication process.

References

DeVito, A. J. (2012). *The Interpersonal Communication Book*. New Jersey: Pearson.