

Business communication: seven cs of communication design



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Business Communication Seven C's of Communication Design [pic] Do you design your communications or do they just kind of happen? When your communication is important — that is, when you want it to be remembered — you need to think carefully and design it to resonate with your intended audience. Designing your communication is an iterative process. It begins at a high level, with good questions and good listening; and ends in details; constructing a presentation, document, system or user experience.

You can improve your communication by thinking about seven “ C's” of communication design: The seven C's lay out a simple sequence which can help you start broadly and work your way down to specifics. Here are the seven C's, in order: 1. Context. What's going on? Do you understand the situation? Is there a dead elephant in the middle of the room that you're not aware of? Ask good questions. You'll need a clear goal before you begin to design any communication. Ask: who are you talking to and what do you want them to do? . Content. Based on your goal, define a single question that your communication is designed to answer. This is the best possible measure of communication effectiveness. What do you want your audience to walk away with and remember? Once you have defined your prime question, set out to answer it. What information is required? Do you have the answer already, or do you need to search it out? 3. Components. Before you build anything, break down your content into basic “ building blocks” of content.

Formulate the information into clusters and groups. What patterns emerge? How can you make the information more modular? Given your goal, what is the most fundamental unit of information? You can use index cards to break

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down information into modules. 4. Cuts. This is one of the hardest parts of the process and most often neglected. People's attention will quickly drift — they expect you to get to the point. Learn to edit. Kill your little darlings. 5. Composition.

Now it's time to design the way you will tell your story. Think in terms of both written and visual composition. When writing; who are your main characters? How will you set up the scene? What are the goals and conflicts that will develop? How will the story reach resolution? In visual terms; where will the reader begin? How will you lead the eye around the page? In all your compositional thinking; how will you engage your audience? How will you keep them engaged? Writing it down forces you to think it through! .

Contrast. What are the differences that matter? Use contrast to highlight them: Big vs. little; rough vs. smooth; black vs. white. When making any point, ask, " in comparison with what? " Contrast is a trigger to the brain that says " pay attention! " 7. Consistency. Unless you're highlighting differences, keep things like color, fonts, spacing and type sizes consistent to avoid distracting people. Research shows that any extraneous information will detract from people's ability to assimilate and learn.