 Lecture 9
 The Seven C’s of Effective Communication II

❖ Consideration
Consideration means preparing every message with the message receiver in mind.

  Don’t loose your temper.
  Don’t accuse.
  Don’t charge them without facts.

• You are foremost aware of their desires, problems, circumstances, emotions and probable reaction to your thoughts.
• Handle the matter from their point of view.
• This thoughtful consideration is also called the ‘you-attitude’, the human touch or understanding human nature.

Three specific ways to indicate consideration.

• Focus on ‘you’ instead of ‘I’ or ‘we’.
• Show audience benefit or interest in the receiver.
• Emphasize positive, pleasant facts.

Focus on ‘you’ instead of ‘I’ or ‘we’

• Using ‘you’ does help project a you-attitude.
• Overuse can lead to negative reaction.

• To create considerate, audience-oriented messages, focus on how message receivers will benefit, what they will receive, and what they want or need to know.
• In some cases this can be accomplished by emphasis; you may downplay your own feelings to make a point

Example
We-attitude : I am delighted to announce that we have extended our office hours to make shopping more convenient.
You-attitude : You will be able to shop evenings with the extended office hours.
We-attitude : We’re are sure you must be frustrated by the length of time to ship your documents to Australia.
You-attitude : The documents will be reaching Australia within a weak.

Showing consideration for the audience involves more than just using ‘you’ instead of ‘I’ or ‘we’.
Messages that use ‘we’ can be receiver oriented if ‘we’ includes receiver of the message.
Sometimes avoiding you can reduce potential defensiveness or allow the recipient to save face.
•An extreme example of a negative situation is the collection letter with ‘you’ or ‘your’ in almost every sentence; if the sentences are insulting, sarcastic, tactless or untrue accusations.

The use of ‘you’ in negative situations can be avoided by employing passive voice, making the receiver part of the group.

**Example**

**Intensive**: You failed to enclose your check in the envelop.

**Considerate**:
- Passive voice: The check was not enclosed. 
- Depersonalized: The enveloped did not have a check in it.

**Intensive**: Your contract tells you plainly that

**Considerate**: I am always happy to discuss the contract terms with new employees.

receiver as part of a group

**Intensive**: You are completely off base in your proposal.
**Considerate**: We have different interpretations of the utility of the proposal.

sender oriented with acceptance of responsibility

**Considerate**: The proposal plan three aspects that need clarification.

depersonalized

**Show audience Benefit or Interest in the receiver**

Readers may react positively when benefits are shown to them. Whenever possible and true, show your receivers will benefit from whatever the message asks or announces. Benefits must meet recipient’s needs, address their concerns, or offer them rewards.

- You must keep in mind that what you offer must be perceived as benefits by the receiver.
- You must identify legitimate benefits of your position, policy or product and then put yourself in the place of the receivers to assess their perspective.
- Receivers will be more likely to react favorably and do what you suggest, if you show that the benefits are worth the effort and cost you ask them.
- In situations where actual direct benefit is impossible or irrelevant to the subject matter, the message should at least show concern for the recipients.

- Merely inserting the word ‘you’ does not ensure the ‘you’ attitude, as shown in this sentence.
  - You will be glad to know that we now have a walkup window open 7-9 A.M. and 3-5 P.M. every weekdays.
  - Some readers will wonder “So what!”
Emphasize Positive, Pleasant Facts

• Another way to show consideration is to emphasize pleasant and positive facts.
• This means stressing what can be done instead of what cannot be done.
• Also you must focus on words your recipient considers favorable.

Negative: It is impossible to open an account for you today.
Positive: As soon as your signature card reaches us we will gladly open an ...

Negative: We don’t refund if the returned item is soiled and unsalable.
Positive: We refund when the returned item is clean and resalable.

Negative: When you travel on the company expense, you will not receive first class fare.
Positive: When you travel on company expense, your approved fare is not for tourist class.

Among the positive words to which the readers react favorably are benefit, cordial, happy, generous, loyal, pleasure, thanks, thoughtful etc

Among the negative words the reader might react unfavorably, due to past experience with such words.
Blame, complaint, failed, fault, regret, reject, trouble, unfair and many others.

Example

The following opening of a letter the negative words are underlined, you’d rather not have at all.

-We regret that, since you closed your account, your name is missing from our long list of satisfied customers. We sincerely hope that inspire the best efforts of our fine staff, there were no occasions on which you felt we failed to serve you properly.

Checklist

• See your material from reader’s point of view.
• ‘You’ is more desirable than ‘I’ or ‘we’ in most instances.
• Readers like to see these benefits. Be sure benefits are a prominent part of the message.
• Consciously use positive words.

Concreteness

Communicating concretely means being specific, definite and vivid rather than vague and general.

Misunderstanding of words have produced tragedies both in war and in peace, in business and non-business situations.
Communicating concretely means being specific, definite, and vivid rather than vague and general. Often it means using denotative (direct, explicit, often dictionary-based) rather than connotative words.

The benefits to business professionals of using concrete facts and figures are:
- Your receivers know exactly what is desired
- When you supply specifics for the reader you increase the likelihood of that you message will be interpreted the way you intended.

The following guidelines should be followed to compose concrete, convincing messages:
- Use specific and figures.
- Put action to words
- Use vivid image building words.

**Use specific facts and figures**

It is desirable to be precise and concrete both in written and oral technical communications.

Vague: Students’ GMAT scores are higher.
Concrete: In 1996 the GMAT scores averaged 600; by 1997 they had risen to 610.

**Example**

Vague: Eastern Europe is making progress in obtaining investment.
Concrete: In 1990 the investment in Eastern Europe was $30 million; today that figure has increased by 12%.

**Example**

- Vague
  - She’s a brain.
- Concrete, precise
  - Her grade point average in 1996 was 3.9 on a four point scale.

But there are some exceptions to the facts and figures rule.

1. When it not possible to be specific.
   “you may not have precise facts and figures”

2. When you wish to be diplomatic:
   “you have missed three invitations to my office” is harsh.
   You may be more tactful by saying “I've sent you several reminders to see me in my office”

3. When the exact figures are unimportant;
   “more than half the committee was present”
Put action in your verbs

1. Use active rather than passive verbs.
2. Put action in your verbs rather than in nouns and infinitives.

Use the active Voice

A passive verb has three characteristics:
1. The subject does not do the acting in the sentence.
2. The verb consists of two or more words. For example ‘to be’
3. The word ‘by’ is expressed or implied. ‘by whom’ etc.

Example

•Passive (Subject receives the Action)
  -The tests were administered by the professors.
•Active (Subject performs the Action)
  -The professors administered the tests.

•Passive (Subject receives the Action)
  -Grades of the students will be sent to you by the school.
•Active (Subject performs the Action)
  -The school will send students their grades.

Active verbs make the sentence more

1. Specific – “The Dean decided” is more specific than “a decision has been made”
2. Personal – “You will note” is both personal and specific than “It will be noted”
3. Concise – “Figures show” as compared to “it is shown by figures”
4. Emphatic – “The students held a contest” as compared to “a contest was held by the students”

Passive Instead of Active

•When you want to avoid personal blunt accusations
  -‘The October check was not included’ is more tactful than ‘you failed to include….’
  -‘Attendance at the meeting id required’ is less hard than ‘You must attend….’

•When you want to stress the object of the action
  -‘you are invited’ is better than ‘we invite you’
  -‘you savings account is insured up to’ you have intentionally stressed ‘your account’
Put action in verbs, not in nouns.

Action hiding in a 'quiet noun'
Professor Saima Sherazi will give consideration to the report.

Action in a verb
Professor Saima Sherazi will consider the report.

Example
•Action hiding in infinitive
  - The duty of the secretary is to check all the incoming mail and to record it.
•Action in Verbs
  - The secretary checks all the incoming mail and records it.

Use vivid, Image building words
You can make your message forceful by using

•comparisons
•sensory appeals
•figurative language
•concrete nouns
•well-chosen adjectives

❖Comparisons
Bland Image : This is a long letter.
More Vivid Image : This letter is three times as long as you said it would be.

Figurative Language

Literal : Her work in groups was exemplary.
Figurative: She could be called the spark plug of the group.

Checklist
•Were you precise in using facts and figures whenever possible?
•Did you use active voice more than passive?
•Is there action in verbs rather than in nouns?
•Did you try occasionally to use vivid, image building words ? But in business writing use them sparingly.