



Newsletter, April 2017

In this newsletter, you will find current announcements, upcoming conferences, and a summary of the articles found in this month's issue, the second of a two-part special issue on Leadership Communication.

Announcements

Seeking Research Collaborators

The Department of Business Communication at the Marshall School of Business is seeking research collaborators in a teaching project that involves undergraduate students from across the globe working in virtual teams. Dubbed the "Virtual Business Professional Project" and co-sponsored by IBM, the six-week assignment gives students real-world experience using communication and collaboration technologies employed in today's corporate environment. Using the IBM Connections platform, students plan and hold virtual meetings, co-author and collaboratively revise documents, use project management tools, and create online presentations. Researchers are currently gathering both quantitative and qualitative research from students to learn more about how they use technology in teams, intercultural communication, and leadership. To learn more about the project, please contact Jolanta Aritz at aritz@marshall.usc.edu.

Upcoming Conferences

The **15th ABC Asia-Pacific Conference** is scheduled June 10-12, 2017 at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong SAR. The theme of the conference is "Business Language and Communication in the Age of Digitalization and Globalization." The URL for the conference web site is <http://www.cbs.polyu.edu.hk/2017abc/>

The **82nd Annual International Conference** of the Association for Business Communication will be held October 18–21, 2017 at the Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin, Ireland. The theme for this year's conference is "Shaping and Expanding the Landscape of Business Communication." Conference proposals are due April 25, 2017. For more information, visit <http://www.businesscommunication.org/page/2017-annual>

IJBC Notes

IJBC's current average time from submission to first decision is 40 days. Its average time from submission to final decision is 63 days.

2014 Web of Science® Estimated Impact Factor is 0.706

2015 Ranking: 2015 SJR (SCImago Journal Rank) Score: 0.312 | 87/269 Economics, Econometrics and Finance (miscellaneous) | 110/285 Business, Management and Accounting (miscellaneous) (Scopus®)

Featured Articles from April 2017

Special Issue on Leadership Communication: Reflecting, Engaging, and Innovating, Part 2
Edited by Jacqueline Mayfield and Milton Mayfield of Texas A & M International University

"What's Past Is Prologue": A Look at Past Leadership Communication Research with a View toward the Future

Milton Mayfield and Jacqueline Mayfield



Communicating Leader-member Relationship Quality: The Development of Leader Communication Exchange Scales to Measure Relationship Building and Maintenance through the Exchange of Communication-based Goods

Leah M. Omilion-Hodges and Colin R. Baker



A half century of leader-member exchange research suggests that leaders share high- or low-quality relationships with members. However, these binary shortcuts dissolve the complexity of what is actually exchanged between leader and member. Therefore, a communicative view of these special dyadic relationships is forwarded, suggesting that leader-member relationships are a byproduct of, and produced through, concrete and continuous



communicative exchanges. This scholarship answers long-standing calls for enhanced theoretical precision in parceling out the literal exchanges that take place between leader and member. Based on the results of focus groups and two self-report surveys, scales are developed to measure various dimensions of leader communicative behavior that may facilitate or hinder relationship development and maintenance. Group-level implications are discussed.

Strategic Communication in the C-Suite

Paul Argenti



This article explores the ways in which C-suite executives are using corporate communications to execute strategy. Over the past two decades, we have seen a profound shift in how leaders view communications within organizations. This shift has moved from a tactical and superficial focus (speech writing, media placements) to a more strategic and elevated level (developing and implementing strategy through communication, sophisticated measurement using big data to understand constituencies and influence reputation). Thus, the central research question in this article is focused on the following theme: “How do leaders use communications to execute strategy in the 21st century?” Through a review of current literature and synthesis of both published and newly conducted interviews, the article provides a snapshot of leadership communication in organizations today as it relates to the execution of strategy.

Discourse of Leadership: The Power of Questions in Organizational Decision Making

Jolanta Aritz, Robyn C. Walker, Peter Cardon, and Lisa Zhli (photo not available)

This study aims to more fully understand leadership when it is understood as primarily discursive in nature and co-constructed by those involved in interactions in which influence emerges. More specifically, it explores the performative role of questions as speech acts. In this case, we look at how questions are employed as a key discourse type to enable professionals to construct their authority and establish leadership roles. The data consist of transcripts of decision-making meetings. A scheme for coding the question-response sequence in conversation was used to identify the form, social function, and conversational sequence of question use. The questions then were analyzed by speaker and his or her role as leader versus non-leader. While questions can result in or encourage

group collaboration by opening the discussion and inviting contributions, they can also be used to direct team members, seize the floor, and influence decision making. The study contributes to the study of leadership and team decision making by looking at how questions operate as a multifunctional discourse type and how they are used to establish influence in decision-making meetings.



New Lamps for Old: The Gulf Leadership Communication Framework

Catherine Nickerson and Valerie Priscilla Goby

This study examines ways to counteract the arbitrary mix of organizational communication practices that has evolved in the Gulf Region as a result of the different cultures that make up the workforce there. To this end, the authors attempt to develop a conceptual model of leadership communication, the Gulf Leadership Communication



Framework. In this analysis, the authors refer to two sets of empirical data on discursive leadership and interpersonal communication that were collected from about 600 Emirati nationals. Their findings show that a leadership model for social contexts such as the Gulf Cooperation Council may look very different from the models that obtain elsewhere; this is the case because in the region organizational communication may be most successful when people use strategies that privilege uniformity, rather than selecting strategies that celebrate diversity.



Commentary: Racial Incidents at the University of Missouri: The Value of Leadership Communication and Stakeholder Relationships

John A. Fortunato, Ralph A. Gigliotti, and Brent D. Ruben



A series of incidents in 2015 escalated racial tensions at the University of Missouri that ultimately contributed to the departure of the university president and chancellor. This case highlights the importance of focusing attention on competent leadership communication, which includes the development and maintenance of strong relationships with key stakeholder groups; the ability to predict, recognize, detect, and address issues that may rise to the level of crisis as defined by stakeholders; and the skill to craft timely, sensitive messages and effectively use



interpersonal and mediated channels of message distribution and retrieval, especially social media,

so that adequate information flow to and from institutional leaders allows them to learn of, understand, and address stakeholders' concerns as they emerge.

Research Note: Leader Talk and the Creative Spark: A Research Note on How Leader Motivating Language Use Influences Follower Creative Environment Perceptions

Jacqueline Mayfield and Milton Mayfield

Garden variety creativity has a vital but often overlooked role in business. Garden variety creativity happens whenever someone develops a new way of dealing with a workplace issue. It contrasts with institutional creativity—actions meant to develop radical new business methods and products at an organizational level. Institutional creativity advances a business' place in an industry. Garden variety creativity makes daily routines more efficient and fulfills employees' need for expression in the workplace. This article examines how leader communication—as captured by the motivating language framework—influences employee's perceptions of the creative environment. Structural equation model analysis found a strong, significant, and positive relationship between leader motivating language use and worker perceptions of their creative environment. Motivating language use explained 55% of the variance in creative environment perceptions in a sample of more than 140 workers drawn from diverse organizations. Findings also showed a 7% increase in creative environment perceptions for every 10% increase in motivating language use.



Brent A. Ruben

Upcoming in July 2017

Drawing from Available Means: Assessing the Rhetorical Dimensions of Facebook Practice

Mark Hannah and Chris Lam

A Corpus-study of Bank Financial Analyst Reports: Semantic Fields and Metaphors

Winnie Cheng

Social Media Adoption in Business-to-Business: IT and Industrial Companies Compared

Ellen Van Praet, Celine Veldeman, and Peter Mechant

Inclusive Language Use in Multicultural Business Organizations: The effect on Creativity and Performance

Anders Klitmøller and Jakob Anders

Commentary: A Space for Place in Business Communication Research

Deborah Andrews

IJBC Editorial Board

Each newsletter profiles a selection of board members for our readers.

Reeta Raina is a professor of communication at the Foundation for Organizational Research and Education (FORE) School of Management in New Delhi, India. Her research interests include intercultural communication, communication competence, interpersonal communication,



organizational communication, social media, work engagement, nonverbal communication, and listening skills, among others. She has published a research book, *The Constitutive Role of Communication in Building Effective Organizations*, and received several best paper and outstanding publications awards. In addition, she has been named Best Professor in Human Resource Management from the National Education Award sponsored by *Headlines Today*.

Dorien Van de Mierop is an associate professor at the University of Leuven, where she specializes in discourse analysis. Her research focuses on the analysis of identity construction and positioning. In particular, she investigates the different linguistic means through which people shift in and out of different identities while interacting--and at the same time negotiating these identities--with others. Her early work mainly focused on the construction of identities in institutional contexts. While the analysis of workplace discourse (in business and medical settings) is still a focal point in her research interests, she has also worked extensively on narrative data, obtained through research interviews on a range of different topics (e.g., World War II, The Belgian Congo, Pre-Civil War slavery in the US).



Sushil Oswal is associate professor in the School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington, Tacoma, and also teaches in the Disability Studies Program there. His current research is focused on the areas of digital accessibility and disability. He works with students interested in studying technology use among the blind and older adult communities, development of accessible interfaces for people with visual disabilities, digital disability, or general research in the area of Disability Studies. Oswal and his co-author Lisan Meloncon, associate professor at the University of Cincinnati, won the 2015 Association for Business Communication “Distinguished Publication in Business Communication” award for their

article “Paying Attention to Accessibility when Designing Courses in Technical Communication.” He earned his Ph.D in Technical Communication and Rhetoric from the University of Cincinnati.

Steven Ralston is Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Morehead State University in Morehead, Kentucky. Before assuming that role, he was dean of the School of Communication and the Arts at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York. Prior to Marist, Ralston was professor and chair of the Department of Communication at Northern Illinois University, where he oversaw the university's largest undergraduate major and a sizeable Master of Arts program. Previously, he was professor and chair of the Department of Communication and Visual Art at the University of Michigan-Flint, and director of the Oral Communication Proficiency Program and assistant director of the Teaching and Learning Center at East Tennessee State University. He has written more than 60 articles, papers, and presentations.



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Contact Editor-in-Chief Robyn Walker at rcwalker@marshall.usc.edu with research news or announcements that you would like included in the next newsletter.

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