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How Men and Women Communicate

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HOW MEN AND WOMEN COMMUNICATE



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BFA Speech Communication

Abstract Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Lindenwood in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirement for the Degree of
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1993

How Men and Women Communicate

Men and women have successfully cohabited for centuries; however, the fact still remains that men and women are different and, therefore, communicate differently. This fact is becoming blatantly apparent in our nation's organizations. It is imperative for the success of our country's organizations that men and women comprehend their own communication process and, more importantly, one another's.

The work force is changing drastically. It has been estimated that the number of traditional White American males entering the work force will be diminished substantially. In fact, women will comprise the largest portion of the incoming work force by year 2000.

In order for our organizations to flourish and grow, the traditional male dominated work environment needs to be modernized. The corporate environment can be brought up to date by first realizing that the employees that make up the work force are individuals that have individual needs. This realization is the basis for "managing diversity," a buzz word for the '90's and the management style of the future. Basically, this management technique is integrated with an androgynous tone treating all employees, male and female, with impartiality and fairness, but most importantly, as individuals with individual needs.

This culminating project provides insight on the communication process(es) that occur between men and women. For example, men tend to

communicate as though operating within a hierarchical social order. They view conversations as negotiations while pursuing their independence. Women, on the other hand, communicate within a complex network of connections together. They want to establish connections while avoiding insolation. It's easy to see why miscommunication can and does occur: men and women are seeking different rewards from the same process. This project also provides a profile on "managing diversity." In order to create a work environment conducive to diversity there are basic communication skills that must be followed:

- 1.) Explicit understanding of the assumptions, norms and social techniques that form the basis of the managers own culture.
- 2.) The understanding of the manger's own biases and stereotypical assumptions about others and how these processes affect decision making.
- 3.) Interpersonal communication and listening skills geared to those from other cultures or the female worker.
- 4.) Awareness of the organizations unwritten rules of success.
- 5.) Team building skills with which to manage conflicts, develop cohesion, and enhance communication between all employees.

This project not only explores the communication process(es) of men and women, it provides an in-depth analysis on how women entering the work force will impact our nation's organizations. It also provides a guideline for "managing diversity" and how that management technique positively affects the communication process between men and women in our nation's organizations.

**THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS OF MEN AND WOMEN
IN OUR NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS**

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A Culminating Project Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
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Chapter 1: Introduction

There have been differences between men and women since the beginning of time. Often times the problem is not that we are different, it is that we do not understand one another. The communication lines between men and women are often twisted and tangled to the point that miscommunication is considered the norm rather than a rare occurrence.

The communication process, although complex, is certainly not unachievable. After all, men and women do communicate effectively everyday. Men and women have cohabitated successfully for centuries; however, it has been within the past twenty years that men and women have experienced problems communicating with one another effectively. It has been within this time frame that women have entered the workplace. The number of traditional white American males entering the work force is shrinking (Buhler 22). It has been estimated that by the year 2000, women will comprise the largest portion of the incoming labor force (Buhler 21). In order to establish a successful workplace the individuals, men as well as women, must each comprehend their own communication process and, more importantly, one another's.

Men and women have different communication styles. Men tend to communicate as though operating within a hierarchial social order ("How the Other Half Works" 21). They tend to view conversations as negotiations while pursuing their independence. Women, on the other hand, communicate as though operating within a complex network of connections together (Tannen 38). They tend to view life as a community, they want to establish

connections while avoiding isolation ("How the Other Half Works" 21). The reason miscommunication occurs is because men and women are seeking different rewards from the same process. The basic problem with gender mixed groups is that neither men nor women understand this process about one another. For example, men tend to feel oppressed by what they feel are lengthy discussions about minor decisions. Women, on the other hand, expect decisions to be discussed first and made by consensus. Women seem to appreciate the discussion, in fact, they view it as involvement ("How the Other Half Works" 25). One of the most common misunderstood phrases for a woman is "What do you think?" In a situation when a woman is trying to initiate a free wheeling discussion by asking, "What do you think," men often respond as if they are being asked to decide (Tannen 29).

The basic premise for this communication problem has already been established: simply men and women are different. The "gender gap," if you will, begins in childhood. As children, men and women are talked to and about differently, touched and approached differently, addressed and dealt with through role assumptions and expectations (Conlin 12). These assumptions and expectations are so ingrained in each individual--and even in our institutions--that anyone who deviates from them pays harshly (Conlin 12). For example, when a woman speaks directly and frankly, onlookers will describe her as a bitch. In my opinion, that label does not spring from prejudice, but from competition. Ronnie Schor, President of Speak Without Fear International, Inc., New York, says, "That tampering with fundamental expectations is threatening to some people, forcing them to pull away, ridicule,

or talk differently to the individual" (Conlin 14). The fact remains that when a woman joins a meeting of men, whether she likes it or not, she is tampering with their fundamental expectations. Imagine for a moment how the scenario would unfold. Suddenly a woman enters a macho meeting. She tends to smile more frequently and sit squarely on her seat, never taking up more than a chair's width of table space. She doesn't initiate conversation readily; however, when she does join in, she will tend to slap tag questions (It's a nice day...isn't it?") or qualifiers (I think...) on her statements. Men within the meeting interpret these subtle, subconsciously performed matters of style. Suddenly a subliminal chain of events is set off. The men interrupt the woman frequently; they refrain from criticizing the weaker colleague. But unbeknownst to them, men have misread the signals. Meanwhile, the woman would react to male interruption and dominance by sometimes feeling abused or alienated. The woman, thinking the rude interruptions are personal attacks, holds back and stops contributing to the meeting, possibly even stops listening to what's being said (Conlin 36).

To avoid this loss, men must reevaluate their communication style and that of women. The smile is not a sign of submission but a search for acceptance, a common human trait. The tag question and use of qualifiers means not that women are willing to defer, but that they are attempting to be polite. When too many of their tag questions are ignored, they tend to feel as though they are being manipulated.

In this example, there is room for improvement for both the men and women. "Males must reassess their models," says Conlin, "primarily because

women don't want to be penalized for the way they were socialized." In the meantime he suggests that women learn to fend for themselves. Aside from acquiring the vocabulary of men, they must learn to speak loudly and to deal with interruptions (Conlin 22). In my opinion, these techniques may be useful but seem to be a quick fix for a much larger problem.

Having established the difference in the communication process between men and women, I would now like to explore the everchanging workplace. As mentioned earlier, the forecast of women to be established in the workplace by year 2000 is phenomenal. In reality, the changes we are seeing in the workplace will affect us all. I believe we have already begun to experience some changes as a result of the shift in the composition of the work force.

An ever increasing percentage of our new workers continues to be represented by women (Buhler 21). In 1984, white males became a minority in the workforce, 49.3% (Sargent and Stupak 30). For this reason we can no longer ignore the impact women have on the workplace. As more females enter traditional male dominated fields, we must be prepared for the changes taking place. The sheer number of women joining the work force is forever changing the face of the work force drastically. Men and women must recognize the workplace of the '90's as substantially different from that of just ten or twenty years ago. In addition, these changes are only paving the way for the highly publicized workforce of the year 2000 (Buhler 22).

The major shift affecting corporate America is from the vertical values (rugged individualism, autonomy, and independence) to the horizontal values

(interdependence, mutuality, networking, and coalition building). It is a transformation from a predominantly masculine value system to an androgynous one (andro is Greek for male, gyne is Greek for female). The new value set calls for each person to have a blend of values--competence and compassion, action and introspection. It is the style required for effective leadership in organizational America in the year ahead (Sargent and Stupak 30).

Such a blend mixes together two sets of values. First, the so-called masculine characteristics that managers will need to continue to exhibit--dominance, independence, a direct achievement style, a reverence for rational, analytical problem solving, a valuing of verbal behavior, and a competitive strategic approach. Next, the so-called feminine characteristics--concern for relationships, a valuing of expressive behavior, attention to nonverbal behavior, the ability to accommodate and mediate, and a vicarious achievement style actually enjoying the development of others (Sargent and Stupak 31).

The fact of today is that high-performing organizations demand that good managers have both the head and the heart to be effective leaders. The nature of management is changing as well. Today's managers spend fifty to ninety percent of their time interacting with people--seventy percent of that in groups--and fifty percent operating outside the chain of command. An androgynous blend of competencies is critical for managerial effectiveness and organizational and corporate leadership (Sargent and Stupak 31). The Japanese have paved the road to management. The success has changed the management styles not only in the United States, but around the world. The

idea of participative, bottom-up communication not only allows for better management-worker relationship, the finished products are a step above all others around the world.

The Japanese realized early on how the face of the work place is changing. They incorporated "quality circles" which allowed everyone, no matter what their job title, to be involved in the decision making process. The results being extremely successful. The ideal that "no idea is a bad idea" is the basis for a quality circle. The fact that everyone is encouraged to participate allows for worker satisfaction and a new perspective for management.

As this nation evolves from an industrial economy to one that is '60's service-oriented, leadership requires both masculine and feminine dimensions of power. The reality being unilateral power must be blended with synergistic power. Although personal dominance may be effective in small groups, leaders who guide large groups and massive corporations in the service economy must become effective in the more subtle and socialized forms of power and influence. In today's everchanging marketplace, the ideal of participative management styles are quite simply more productive.

Management has to accept the ideal of the participative technique in order to keep up with the changing world economy. A socialized leadership style must replace the autocratic, directive leadership of the 1930's, 1940's, and 1950's. "Servant leadership," is based on a firm belief in people, generates the empowerment required to move the massive organizations of corporate America onto the new strategic stage of multinational and international

competition and interdependence. In order to implement this style effectively an androgynous style must be adopted and committed to by everyone within that organization in order to maximize effective communication (Sargent and Stupak 33).

In order to face the challenges, both men and women need to be trained on how to be an androgynous manager. In today's society, unfortunately managers (men or women) do not have the luxury of autocracy. Management is currently defined as getting things done through people--between superior and manager, between manager and subordinate, and between manager and peer. The way managers spend their time, organizational leadership becomes an influence-peddling, coalition-visioning, and power-negotiating process. Successful management styles tend to emphasize more collaboration and less competition, and different decision-making styles in different situations. Contingency decision making and situational leadership styles are becoming more widespread; however, we really have not moved to participative management. Instead we tend to see a blend of autocratic and consultative styles (Sargent and Stupak 34).

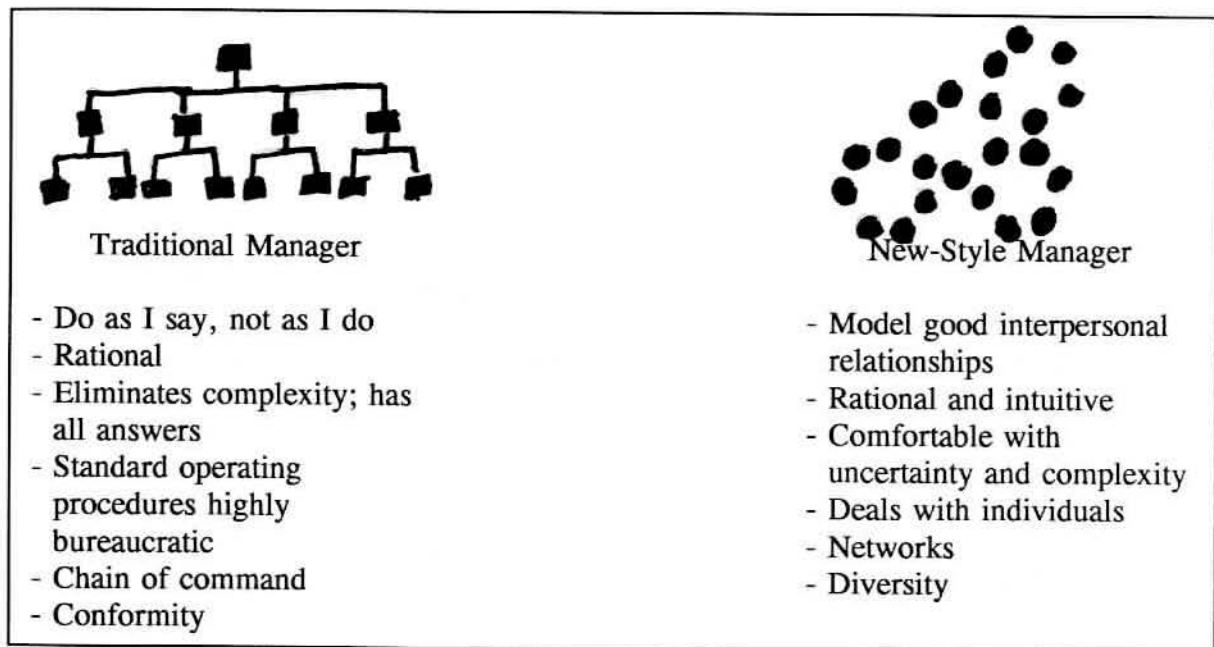
In order to take a step toward dealing with the previous facts mentioned above, Alice Sargent and Ronald Stupak suggest we need a three-step approach to transform current management styles to the androgynous style of the future.

Step 1: We must design valid models of managerial effectiveness at the first-line, middle-management, and executive levels--models based on androgynous paradigm (shown below).

Step 2: We must define systematic methods for performance-appraisal systems that reinforce and reward the models.

Step 3: We must develop educational and training programs to "grow" managers based on the models.

The Androgynous Manager Model



The necessary training for an androgynous manager is certainly not happening in the business schools and public-administration programs of today. Sixty thousand MBA's are graduated every year in the United States--many of them are possibly future managers--but most degree programs require only

nine hours of management education (Sargent and Stupak 34). Sterling Livingston, President of the Washington, D.C. based Sterling Training Institute has said, "Business schools teach how to problem solve, not problem-find; how to work more with money than with people."

Business school curricula and management-development program should include work in both the theory and practice of each of the seven androgynous manager competencies:

1. Technical competence.
2. Problem-solving competence (analytical shells left and right brain thinking).
3. Self-awareness competence (awareness of the impact of one's behavior on others - introspection).
4. Interpersonal competence.
5. Team leadership and membership effectiveness.
6. Entrepreneurial competence.
7. Leadership.

(Sargent and Stupak 35)

The purpose of my thesis is to explore the communication process between men and women and how that process affects women within the ever changing workplace. I will prove that the androgynous management style must be adopted in order for men and women to successfully communicate and co-exist within a corporate environment.

Chapter Two, the Review of Literature, I will introduce several authors as well as two presidents of so-called "90's Companies." I will survey broadly the opinions of the authors on the communication styles of men and women as well as certain communication situations.

Chapter Three, The Selective Review and Evaluation of Research, I will choose two authors introduced in Chapter Two and analyze their opinions more in depth. I will prove that these "ideals" are the best situation for men and women to communicate effectively with one another.

Chapter Four, the results of chapter, I will provide a "Guideline of Successful Communication Within the Workplace." The chapter will also review the androgynous management style and why it works best.

Chapter Five, the discussion, will have outside feedback from existing managers at Dun and Bradstreet. I will also share some of my personal communication processes that I have encountered within the corporate environment.

Chapter II: Review of Literature

This chapter will provide a general overview of how men and women not only communicate but co-exist within the workplace through the opinions of several "experts." I would like to provide a broad overview of different thoughts and opinions. I intend to compare the similarities as well as the differences.

Patricia Buhler

Patricia Buhler holds an MBA in management and is owner of Buhler Business Consultants. She is also employed as an adjunct associate professor at Goldey-Beacon College in Wilmington, Delaware. Buhler stands solid on the fact that the work force is forever changing and that women as well as minorities will be the norm rather than the exception in the 21st century. Buhler states, "To adopt an appropriate healthy attitude about women in the workplace, many of the myths of working women must be dispelled" (Buhler 41).

Myth Number 1: Women cannot occupy high-powered positions because they are "too soft." Ironically, research has found that this so called "soft touch" is just what is indeed necessary to be effective in some situations. More importantly, it cannot be stated unequivocally, that all women are too soft and men are not. Basically, the facts remain clear that various personality traits are found in both men and women.

Myth Number 2: Men cannot work for women. Once again, personality variables are not solely sex related. Men can--and do--work for women just as they can work for other men. I believe an improved attitude overall of women in the workplace would do the most good towards dispelling this myth. Women must be viewed as another component of the diversified workplace with great contributions to be made.

Myth Number 3: Women are short term employees. Some people think that a

single woman will leave when she marries and a married woman will leave when she has a baby. These statements could not be farther from the truth. Women are not merely masking time in the workplace. The fact is, with more dual career couples, it becomes highly unlikely that a marriage would cause a woman to leave her job. In most cases, a young couple needs two incomes to make ends meet. In addition, women today take their jobs seriously and recognize their ability to "have it all." That is, they can be married with a family and still pursue a career of their choice.

Women can be valued, contributing employees of any organization. To consider hiring only a man for a position fails to take into consideration half the available applicants--and is against the law. While it is discrimination to bar women from promotions and job placement, it continues to happen. This scenario, unfortunately, will continue to unfold until attitudes toward women change and myths of women are ignored within the workplace.

Buhler also believes strongly in the ideal of "managing diversity." "Managing diversity" is one of the buzzwords for the 90's, and can be thought of in terms of the job of every manager to go beyond cultural differences to include women. Basically it is dispelling stereotypes and ceasing to measure everyone in the workplace by the standard(s) of the white male. Every organization can benefit from the differences of our employees. The creativity and innovation required to allow organizations to prosper and find their roots in the diversified work force. Women are a major component of this diversification.

Buhler has written numerous articles on this subject; however, it seems that she usually returns to the same premise. If organizations are to survive--let alone flourish--during the 90's, they must adjust now to the changing demographics in the

work force. The major adjustment seems to be women. With two-thirds of the decade's labor pool comprised of women, companies must begin to address the needs of these women and take the problem associated with "managing diversity."

Felice Schwartz

Next, I would like to introduce the thoughts and opinions of Felice Schwartz, President of Catalyst, a New York-based organization whose primary mission is to affect change in the workplace for women (Thornburg 53). Schwartz does admit that women's workplace role's have evolved dramatically over the past thirty years, much still has to be done for corporations to realize women's individual potential. For example, in a 1990 Women in Corporate Management survey, Catalyst found that of the Fortune 1000 companies, fewer than one percent of human resource respondents said development of high potential women was a priority issue for their companies. Eighty-one percent of CEO's said stereotyping and preconceptions are barriers to women's advancement (Thornberg 53). Supporting this idea, almost half of the human resources officers reported that women in their companies are viewed as having less career commitment than men. Forty-three percent said women are perceived as less likely to take the same initiatives and risks as men (Thornberg 54). This same survey found that human resource officers thought men left their jobs mainly for better opportunities, but women were likely to leave jobs to balance work and family. Although human resource respondents perceive that women leave because of work and family conflicts, forty percent said their company does not offer any form of flexible work arrangements to managerial and professional employees. This study also found that in more than fifty percent of the responding companies, fewer than five percent of the Senior Staff were women.

Schwartz' philosophy is "that women have entered a world created by men for men and that world has to accommodate to women." She also believes that "if women have to live by men's values and in men's environment, they're not going to succeed" (Thornburg 54).

If we pretend that women are just like men, and therefore conditions are okay, then what incentive does business have to change? The fact remains that the productivity of women is impeded with policies that aren't responsive to their needs today, with barriers that are there by virtue of men's behavior to women, by sexual harassment, by lack of role models and mentors, and if business can recognize that they are impeding women's productivity, they will recognize that this is costing money. Basically, the attrition of women, the turnover, the change in productivity costs money. The changes that could be made won't cost anything like what business will get by virtue of tapping the talent and ability of women and permitting them to function at levels that are commensurate with their abilities.

Schwartz seems to want to understand as much as possible about the issues that are facing women. She wants to analyze them and throw out to professional and corporate communities the alternative options that are available in addressing these problems.

Communicating Effectively

By Susan Dellinger and Barbara Deane

I chose this book because it not only addressed communicating; it addressed the issue of effective management and how the two are intertwined. The basic premise of the book deals with the idea that managers are communicators and being

an effective communicator helps to be an effective manager. However, it seems it is the rare manager who pays attention to how he or she communicates. The book is very positive in that it points out that every work day abounds in opportunities to improve one's communicating skills. The book deals with all types of communication, for example, the importance of nonverbal behavior as well as listening skills are addressed. Under the general heading of interpersonal communication the authors deal with such topics as job interviews, performance appraisals, corrective counseling, meetings, giving presentations and of course, writing. The fact that communicating is not just the giving and receiving of information and opinions is established in the early chapters. Dellinger and Deane deal with the ideal of what effective communication can accomplish in everyday life as well as the corporate environment.

One of the reasons I chose the book is that the format is similar to that of a handbook. I view this book as a tool to grow with and learn from with each new situation that may arise. Each chapter begins with a set of questions which puts you into a familiar but difficult communication situation. At the end of each chapter is a group of "exercises" that extend and apply the information discussed in the chapter. I found this to be a highly intrusive and fun way to approach, learn, and find solutions to various communication obstacles.

For example, one of the most helpful chapters for me was entitled Managing the Meeting. Have you ever been involved in a meeting that its sole purpose was to decide when the next meeting would take place? Working within small groups can be one of the most frustrating experiences if you don't understand what is taking place. Once you can understand the proper roles and establish guidelines for those roles to

flourish, a small group (or meeting) is fun to participate in and a very productive tool to accomplish whatever task may be at hand.

Basically there are ten different group roles divided into two separate categories.

Task-Orientated

- 1.) Initiator - Get discussion started; offers direction to move meeting along to complete agenda.
- 2.) Informer - Gives information necessary to task fulfillment; offers ideas, teaches others, gives presentations.
- 3.) Clarifier - Attempts to make a point clear; repeats another's statements to aid in group understanding.
- 4.) Summarizer - Tries to sum up in order to move on toward fulfilling the goal.
- 5.) Norm-Setter - Attempts to establish rules by which the group will function as to provide structure for the meeting.

People-Orientated

- 1.) Harmonizer - Attempts to set a comfortable environment, jokes, socializes, tries to make people feel at home.
- 2.) Gate-Keeper - Keeps lines of communication open, makes sure everyone has a chance to speak, may draw out reticent people.
- 3.) Consensus Seeker - Attempts to reach consensus on items requiring a decision; blocks domination and attempts to satisfy all participants. Wants everyone to feel good.
- 4.) Compromiser - Expresses willingness to give in so that others' point of view can be heard; tries to find equitable solutions to reduce conflict.
- 5.) Referee - When conflict emerges, tries to lessen hostility by finding points of commonality; may also provide comic relief to reduce tension.

(Dellinger & Deane 174-175)

Understanding how all of the different roles fit together, it is easier for me to look at small group situation, see who is playing what role, and understand how the communication process is working.

This comprehensive handbook is an inestimable value to any manager interested in developing his or her communication skills. In order to have a successful environment, we must be able to communicate effectively with one another. I feel that this book is a reliable tool for not only improving communication skills but managerial as well. I really like the fact that this book can be used as a learning tool, a tool that can be referred to time and time again, whenever a communication or management situation can be improved.

Beyond Race and Gender

by R. Roosevelt Thomas, Jr.

This book deals with unleashing the power of the total work force by managing diversity. This concept was mentioned earlier by Patricia Buhler, owner of Buhler Business Consultants. However, I choose this book because it deals with more specific situations. Thomas explains that American consumers are fast becoming more diverse as well, as demanding a diverse work force to understand and save them (Thomas 4). The fact that minorities, immigrants, and women now hold more than half of the jobs in the United States provides the premise that by year 2,000, only about one out of every seven new employees in America will be a white male (Thomas 5).

Diversity in the work place is here to stay. Managing that diversity is a business imperative for the 1990's. In Beyond Race and Gender, Thomas forces organizations to face facts and embrace the challenges of the everchanging work environment. Thomas states "managing diversity is the only efficient way for Americans to compete and prosper" (Thomas 8).

The book looks far beyond past approaches such as affirmative action programs. It explains why such efforts are doomed to fail and focuses on the real solution--transforming the roles of the corporate culture to reflect diversity. There are no quick fixes, for in reality none exist. Instead this book provides a road map and an action plan for positive, permanent change.

The book addresses such issues as taking a hard look at the organizational culture and identifying the deepest elements of the culture--the "roots" from which corporate behavior is initiated. Next, it allows one to determine if the roots support or sabotage plans for managing diversity. Thomas explains that is imperative for the cultural roots--those negative, unconscious assumptions about gender, race, age and management style will be changed or they eventually choke the organization if left to grow (Thomas 42).

"Corporate change is not for the squeamish," the author warns. "Creating and managing a diverse work force is a process not a destination" (Thomas 12).

Sisterhood Betrayed Women In The Workplace

and

All About Eve Complex

by Jill Barber and Rita E. Watson

I choose the book because I thought it only fair to view how women treat women with the organization and why. It has already been established that within the past twenty years an unprecedented number of women have entered the job market. Many women were armed with faith in sisterhood, believing that their female colleagues would help them succeed in the previously male domain of the office. But

instead of finding their "sisters" ready to extend a helping hand, many women found they've been stabbed in the back by another woman. The fact is that established women who had to fight to reach their positions in a less liberated time are confronted by ruthless competitive newcomers (Barber and Watson 4). The result is detrimental for all women in organizations because the result is younger women find themselves working for veterans who refuse to share their power, this in return provides no female mentors for women within the organization (Barber and Watson 9).

All About Eve Complex describes a set of feelings, experiences, and anxieties present in numerous women. The book provides a prescriptive analysis to help women deal with familiar situations such as:

- The bitchy boss or colleague who resents you.
- A peer who takes credit for your work or takes advantage of you during a leave of absence.
- Determining if a driven newcomer is a power-hungry manipulator or a legit competitor (Barber & Watson 20).

This study makes it clear that by acknowledging some of the failings of sisterhood, women will no longer need to suffer in silence, but will be able to understand what is happening and why and protect themselves from further acts of sabotage (Barber & Watson 58).

The book provides a short quiz entitled Are You An Eve? The quiz consists of nine questions:

- 1.) Do you ever try to take credit for projects that belong to a boss or colleague?
- 2.) When you are asked to send information for a boss or colleague, do you ever attach a note in your own name rather than saying, "I am sending this at the request of _____?"
- 3.) When you take messages for your boss or colleague, do you suggest that "we all work together here" in order to create the impression that you are on equal footing or "part of the team?"
- 4.) Do you parrot your bosses words, and then give others the impression that, given the chance, you could do this on your own because you do most of the work anyway?
- 5.) Are you adopting the dress or mannerisms or contacts of a successful boss or colleague?
- 6.) Have you ever gone after a job that another woman wanted or held?
- 7.) Have you ever taken other people's ideas and convinced yourself that they were yours?
- 8.) Have you ever given information to another woman to be used to betray someone?
- 9.) Do you tend to talk to others behind their backs?

The book explains that if you answered yes to one or more of these questions that you are harboring an Eve trait, which in itself is not always a negative thing. Eve traits become negative only when used destructively. For example, answering yes to questions two or three is not necessarily destructive. Some bosses may appreciate an assistant's being able to reassure a colleague.

When Eves trample only women in the path to get a prize, that is negative behavior. Recognizing the Eve behavior and finding a new way to channel it positively is one means of changing the destructive patterns that may exist.

Empowerment comes from making these decisions that affect our self-esteem. Women have not been rewarded for their decision-making skills. We were raised to defer to males. When we entered the work world we looked to men to be our leaders. We used the male model because it was the only model we had (Barber & Watson 198). As we were growing up our parents and teachers rewarded us for being good little girls who were sweet, clean and quiet. Even today, twenty years after the beginning of the women's movement, there are many teachers still treating little girls as if they were born to be sugar, spice and everything nice. Some sociologists are saying it is time for little girls--and women--to be rewarded for being adventuresome, courageous and taking a stand (Barber & Watson 208).

Although not all women have the desire to be stars and leaders, all women can learn to make those decision that will help them to lead less stressful lives during the working day, to manage their time more efficiently, and to foster positive interpersonal relationships. In order to make these decisions that increase a woman's power, each woman must look inside herself to reevaluate her role in the world of women who are working alongside both men and women. By respecting each other's decisions, women in the work force can bring to themselves and their colleagues a renewed sense of self-esteem and develop a network of individuals who are willing to share power productively (Barber & Watson 220).

You Just Don't Understand

Women and Men in Conversation

by Deborah Tannen, Ph.D.

Deborah Tannen suggests that we can make all areas of life easier by becoming more aware of gender-based communication styles (Tannen 14). In order to become more aware of this mixed gender communication we must open the lines of communication. Many experts will tend to generalize saying that people are doing things wrong and should change their behavior; however, this usually sounds easier than it turns out to be. There are sensitivity sessions for men, trying to get them to talk more like women. There are assertiveness training sessions for women that tries to get them to talk more like men. There is no doubt that many people can be helped by learning to be more sensitive or more assertive. However, few people can be helped by being told they are doing everything all wrong. And there may be little wrong with what people are doing, even if they are winding up in arguments. The problem may be that each individual is operating within a different system, speaking different genderlect. Genderlect is a term that is introduced early in the book. Basically, genderlect refers to a conversational style.

Understanding genderlects makes it possible to change--to try speaking differently--when you want to. But even if no one changes, understanding genderlect improves relationships. Once people realize that their partners have different conversational styles, they are inclined to accept the difference without blaming themselves. The biggest mistake is believing there is one right way to listen, to talk, to have conversation (Tannen 297).

Not seeing style differences for what they are, people draw conclusions about personality: you're illogical, you're insecure, you're self-centered. Or intentions: you don't listen, you put me down. Believing that there are different ways of showing you're listening or showing you care allows for no-fault negotiation basically by understanding genderlect it allows one to understand, make adjustments without casting or taking blame (Tannen 298).

Understanding the other's way of communicating is a giant step toward opening the lines of communication, and understanding the other's way of communicating.

Tannen suggests that the desire to affirm that women are equal has made some people reluctant to show they are different, because differences can be used to justify unequal treatment and opportunity. Simply stated, there are gender differences in ways of speaking and we need to identify them and understand them. If this is not done men and women will not be able to co-exist with a productive work environment. Being able to recognize gender differences frees individuals from the burden of pathology and allows them to learn and appreciate how the other communicates (Tannen 17).

Incorporating the ideals of "genderlect" and "open communication" into the workforce would allow people to understand why others communicate as they do. Not only would this basic information provide a basis for working communicating relationships, it would allow someone with the desire to change his or her style the proper information to do so.

Tannen suggest that men use conversation to negotiate status; women to create rapport. The way women and men use language differently is the main reason

miscommunication occurs. When the two very separate unique styles clash this leads to frustration, from the female manager who feels she isn't heard in meetings to the male executive who is baffled when his orders spark resentment or anger. A small stylistic adjustment--rather than dramatic intervention--can solve a big problem and through the male style, traditionally has been heard as the sound of authority, that's changing; in fact, the female style of managing its often a decided advantage (Tannen 58).

There are basic differences in the way men and women communicate at work. Women are much less comfortable with the idea of hierarchy. They use language to achieve rapport; they want to get their way but they prefer to get their way by having everyone agree. Basically they don't like to pull rank (Tannen 68).

Many women have a hard time getting, and keeping, the floor when they're in predominantly male meetings. Often women will make a comment that is ignored; later, a male colleague makes the same point and it's discussed and taken seriously and ultimately attributed to him. Part of the reason for this is that the woman presented her point in a stereotypical feminine way--she spoke briefly, phrased it as a question, spoke at a low volume and a high pitch. If the man who followed her used a stereotypical masculine style of speaking--he spoke at length in a loud, declamatory voice--his message was the same but the metamessage was different: "this is important" (Tannen 42). In general women are more comfortable talking one-on-one. The situation of speaking up in a meeting is a lot closer to boys' experience of using language to establish their position in a large group than it is to girls' experience using language to maintain intimacy (Tannen 43).

Tannen suggests that it is critical to be flexible, to adjust your communication style. She suggests that the most important weapon a woman has is her perceptiveness about other people's communication style. Anyone who wants anything in any kind of situation has to be flexible. It's not just adjusting your own behavior, more importantly, it is understanding the behavior of your partner in communication (Tannen 72).

The book provides the basic information that is crucial to understand for personal as well as corporate communication. Tannen suggests that just admitting that men and women are different is the first step taken in the direction of understanding how men and women use language to communicate and why.

In conclusion, it's easy to see that the communication process between men and women is a major component for the overall success of organizations in the future. All of the authors discussed above agree that the work force is changing and in order to take advantage and move ahead in the years to come, men and women must learn how to effectively communicate with one another.

Chapter III: Selective Review and Evaluation of Research

In Chapter Three, I will deal with more specific communication and management situations. I would like to explore, analyze if you will, two books that were introduced in Chapter Two. These books are Beyond Gender and Race, R. Roosevelt Tremas Jr. and Communicating Effectively, A Complete Guide for Better Managing, by Susan Dellinger and Barbara Deane. Both of these books directly address the communication process between men and women within the ever changing work environment. Furthermore, the books provide a basis for improving corporate environment for workers and managers by not only improved communication processes, but by androgynous diversity style of management.

Beyond Gender and Race

by R. Roosevelt Thomas Jr.

The very title of this book Beyond Gender and Race proposes that an androgynous management style is critical for the success of corporations in the future. The fact being that managers must look beyond the skin color, heritage and sex of their employees in order to "untap" the knowledge of every employee. The increasing diversity of the American work force is simply a fact of life. A new way of thinking about management must be adopted. There is no longer a style of us and them, instead the diversity of the work force must be viewed as a resource to be managed. Managing diversity can be defined as a comprehensive managerial process for developing an environment that works for all employees (Thomas 9). Managing diversity allows corporations to develop (evolve) steps for generating a natural capability to tap the potential of all employees, including female employees. Another word for happy employees' full potential is "empowerment." Empowerment has

been a new "buzz word" recently and may take on many different faces. The ideals of "total quality" and "push decision making down" are examples of empowerment. The success of these types of initiatives depend on the ability to empower the total work force. In the context of a diverse workforce, this circumstance means managing diversity--being androgynous--becomes a critical determinant of success.

The full scope of diversity is not limited to race or gender, but rather extends to everyone within the organization. It extends to age, personal and corporate background, education, function, and personality. It includes lifestyle, sexual preference, geographic origin, and tenure within the organization (Thomas 10). A commitment of diversity is a commitment to all employees, not an attempt at preferential treatment.

Why is managing diversity better than the traditional approach of management? Basically, as a way of thinking about human resources, managing diversity is new. Managing diversity means approaching diversity at three levels simultaneously: individual, interpersonal, and organizational. The traditional approach has been on individual and interpersonal aspects alone. The new concept for managing diversity is an issue for the entire organization, involving the very way organizations are structured (Thomas 12).

Next, managing diversity approaches diversity from a management perspective. That is, it deals with the way organizations are managed, the way managers do their jobs. It is grounded in a very specific definition of "managing:" creating an environment that allows the people being managed to reach their full potential. At its best, it means getting from employees not only everything you have the right to expect, but everything they have to offer (Thomas 12). This concept

demands that managers spend less time actually doing the work and more time enabling employees to do the work.

This concept assumes that adaptation is a two-way street, a mutual process between the individual and the company. This is a change from the traditional management style in that the usual assimilation approach, where the burden of adapting rests solely on the individual that is different (Thomas 12).

Managing diversity is not a program, not an orchestrated set of actions designed to "do" something. It calls for more than changing individual behaviors, it requires a fundamental change in the organization's way of life. How a given organization chooses to view its employees is very much a matter of the organization's culture. That concept seems quite obvious on the surface, but it has significant implications for managing diversity. In fact, one cannot understand the concept of managing diversity without a full appreciation of its linkage to culture.

Corporate culture are the values, behaviors, styles of working, and traditions that exist within an organization. As Thomas writes,

One way to understand culture is to conceptualize an organization as a tree. In this organizational tree, the roots are the corporation's culture. These roots, of course, are below the surface, invisible. But they give rise to the trunk, branches, and leaves--the visible parts of the tree. Nothing can take place in the branches and be sustained naturally unless it is congruent with the roots. (13)

Basically, what Thomas is saying is that a culture is made up by the people who are active in the day to day operations. The people within that organization are individuals with individual needs. If those needs are not met, the organization is not able to flourish and grow.

Preparing For Change

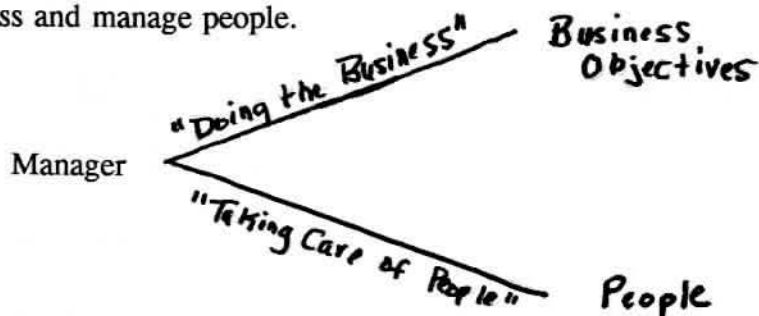
The next step in managing diversity is preparing for change. Managers who set out to implement change--particularly complex, long-term change--must start with themselves. They must achieve clarity in their personal vision and commitment, before they can move toward attempting to engage others in the task. In order to have others do something, they must be motivated. Because the challenge is so enormous, the change agent must have ample motivation to carry him/her through the process. Only the business rationale provides that motivation (Thomas 37). Managers must clarify the concept. Action-oriented managers are reluctant to spend time to explore and understand concepts, instead they often go forward without conceptual understanding (38). Language, as well as concepts, must be clearly understood and consistently used if managers and employees are to understand the managing diversity issue (39).

The Number-One Barrier to Acceptance

A major problem that change agents must overcome has to do with the way "managing" is defined in most corporations. In spite of recent trends towards participatory management styles, most managers in the trenches still believe in and practice the old top-down, directive style. They define "managing" as being a model, showing how the work should get done. Their "best" employees are those who come the closest to being clones of the boss. This is what Thomas refers to as "doer" managers. For these managers, managing the business means doing the work. Doer managers make statements such as, "I wouldn't ask my people to do anything I wouldn't do myself; I roll up my sleeves and get in the trenches" (Thomas 46). Doer managers perceive themselves as the center of the action. They believe that the

corporation values their abilities to do so much that other people have been assigned to them as a way of expanding their personal capability to perform. They believe, in other words, that employees are there to function as their extensions so that their ability to do is enlarged (47).

Doer managers see their job as two-dimensional: they must manage the business and manage people.



They usually fail to integrate the two. Typically, they talk of "people" and "business" issues as if they are unrelated. Furthermore, they see "doing" as their major tasks and taking care of people as secondary. They cherish the "real work" of doing and minimize the "managing people" activity (Thomas 47).

It is easy to see why the doer model is such a barrier to managing diversity. First, it discourages acceptance of diversity. Doer managers seek people who can predictably clone their behavior. They aren't interested in the ways in which differences can enhance the organization. Second, doer managers don't see managing people as a legitimate activity. They will always have difficulty managing a diverse work force because they place no priority on managing people in general.

There is an alternative to the "doer manager." The alternative management style, and one more compatible with managing diversity, is the empowerment model. Manager → management tools → people → desired behavior patterns → business objectives

This model defines the task of managing as enabling employees to behave in ways required to achieve business objectives. In this model, the duality between "business issues" and "people issues" is non-existent. Instead, empowerment of employees is linked directly to or integrated with business objectives. Under the empowerment model, managing is the priority, while doing is a secondary focus (48).

This ideal of managing diversity directly correlates with how the treatment of women within the organization can be improved. By untapping the unlimited source of knowledge from all employees (including women) the goals of the organization can be reached that much sooner. Not only will goals be met, the organization will experience a renewed sense of motivation. When employees are happy, and feel like their presence is an asset to the company, it shows not only in their attitude but in their finished work as well.

Evaluation of Research

In this section, I would like to review an actual case study on the first steps of toward managing diversity discussed in Beyond Race and Gender. Although this is an actual case study of a Fortune 500 Company, the company's name and description have to be disguised; however, the data has not.

The Defense Application Laboratory (DAL) of Culberson Industries' defense products division has the responsibility for developing new defense products. The technology involved is often top secret. Once the government declassifies a technology, DAL researches possible consumer applications. The defense products division then licenses the most viable possibilities to its sister subsidiaries Culberson divisions, all of which manufacture and market a wide range of consumer products.

In the 1960's and 1970's, DAL earned a reputation as being the affirmative action front-runner within the division and the company. Through aggressive recruitment and hiring, the laboratory brought on board significant numbers of women and minority professionals.

Once these individuals were on board, DAL pioneered a variety of interventions within Culberson: sensitivity training for White male managers, corporate survival training for minorities and women, laboratory-wide affirmative action training, and mentoring programs for minorities and woman.

Approximately four years ago, complaints from minorities and women began filtering up to senior management. These concerns surprised the managers, for they thought all was well. For a year or so, they did not consider the grievances to be credible. But they continued and grew in number and visibility. Initially, management gave consideration to reinstating some of the initiatives of the 1960's and 1970's, but backed away from the option because several managers still had difficulty giving much weight to the expressions of concern. Four basic questions were raised:

- 1.) How widespread were the complaints?
- 2.) What did female and minority employees want?
- 3.) What factors were causing the problem?
- 4.) What were the possible solutions?

A research project was launched that examined the "people development" experience of all managers: Hispanic, Blacks, White women, Asian/Pacific Islander men and women, and White males. The goal was to determine what factors and experiences enabled employees to grow. Of special interest were boss/subordinate relationships, mentoring relationships, opportunities for formal training and work assignment patterns.

The basic research tool was the one-on-one interview, using a thirteen-question format. Five groups of managers--twenty-seven Blacks, nineteen Hispanics, nineteen White women, twenty-one Asian Pacific Islanders, and twenty-three White males were included in the study. Their length of service with the company spanned three to twenty-three years; their organizational levels ranged from group leader to laboratory director. All participants were viewed as having successful careers with DAL and were rated at least average.

Interview questions were concerned with uncovering participants' perceptions in five general areas:

- 1.) The reason they had selected and remained with DAL.
- 2.) What had determined their success.
- 3.) The quality of their work assignments and of the supervision they had received.
- 4.) Barriers that hampered further upward mobility.
- 5.) The laboratory's overall success of managing diversity.

Highlight of the Findings

1.) Selection and Retention

Overall, participants reported that they felt good about their employment and that the factors that had attracted them to DAL were the ones that encouraged them to stay.

White men, White women, and Hispanics reported being attracted primarily by the nature of work; Black and Asians/Pacific Islanders were more impressed by the combination of people encountered during the interview process and the security and stability of the company. The nature of the work was also cited by White males as the most important reason for remaining with DAL.

When asked why they might contemplate leaving, all groups--but minorities more than others--cited problem supervisors and concerns about reward and recognition. Blacks, Hispanics, and Asian/Pacific Islanders and White women reported concern about advancement, development management, and the nature of the work. The individuals most dissatisfied among minority groups were those who had been with the company for over fifteen years.

2.) Determinants of Success

When asked to identify the key to their success, most participants named the chance to participate in a decision-making role in important work (that is, having the "right assignment"). For White men and women, the chance to work under a helpful manager was also very important. Many, in fact, saw key work assignments under a helpful manager as representing a critical turning point in their careers.

Blacks, however were more likely to cite a collection of meaningful work experiences under supportive manager than a key event or person. And they believed

that technical accomplishment was almost as important as the "right assignment;" for Asians, it was the most important of all. As a group, Hispanics saw the ability to work with people as being almost as important as the right assignment and helpful managers.

3.) Mentoring

All groups--but to varying degrees--had mentors, and all believed that it was important to success, particularly in the early years. Their mentors performed several roles such as counselors, sponsors, protectors, rescuers. They functioned as sources of insight on DAL--in addition to giving feedback on performance.

4.) Quality of Supervision

Participants from each group reported experiencing an uneven quality of supervision; they readily acknowledged receiving some quality supervision, but they also indicated that they had experienced some very poor managers. Supervisory problems were cited as one of two key reasons for considering leaving the company at some point.

Barriers to Advancement

Responses to this group of questions indicated that White men experienced relatively few barriers to advancement. Each of the other groups saw significant barriers and were specific in their comments. All minorities and women believed that their main barrier was being pigeonholed because of their race, education, or style. They perceived management as uninformed about managing diversity and other over committed to assimilation.

White women cited "being female" as their major barrier. They felt management was uncomfortable with women and that they received inadequate feedback and were excluded from the informal network.

Asian/Pacific Islanders cited twin barriers: "being pigeonholed" as technologist and being discriminated against because of their cultural style.

Blacks saw "racism" as their principal challenge. They were particularly concerned about the informality and ambiguity that characterized upward movement to the higher levels.

An important barrier from groups who came from outside the United States (Asians and Hispanics) was difficulty in communication.

The Company and the Future

DAL wanted to know how participants perceived the laboratory's ability to create an environment that enables all employees and also what their thoughts on how greater progress might be realized. Some groups felt managers needed to better understand and value the groups represented within the organization. This is from a White woman manager:

There needs to be an understanding that women are fundamentally different from men and why that is good. And, an understanding that women do not have to act like men to be effective. We have to get everyone in the organization to realize that there are inherently female advantages that can be utilized. (Thomas 82)

White women managers also noted that although the company had made some allowances for major family responsibilities, more needed to be done. They were concerned about how junior White women managers would feel. A senior White woman manager had this to say:

We need to figure how we are going to deal with the pain young White women will encounter when they have to make choices... At some point, the personal pain level will leap tremendously. the laboratory has only started to make accommodations that will be necessary for working mothers. Being a working mother will constitute the first personal pain for many of these young women, and I'm not just talking about the need for daycare systems. If we do not deal with the issue, there is a danger that we will lost a high percentage of these individuals, especially if we assume that all employees have wives at home to take care of the kids. (Thomas 83)

White male managers in particular, noted a need to enhance managers' ability to manage people in general.

What We Can Learn From the Findings

One of the most important understandings that came out of this study was the complexity of diversity--that there was a great range of differences both among and within the various groups. For example, although the different groups were alike in seeking more opportunities, they focused on different hierarchial positions.

Another key understanding to flow from the research was the degree of difficulty with which some minority respondents understood and adapted to DAL's culture. The assimilation/adaptation approach to employee diversity works best when employees are not very diverse. It is less effective when cultural differences are great.

Acknowledgement of this reality led DAL managers to generate the following recommendations:

- 1.) Leaders and managers must be enrolled in the process of implementing managing diversity.
- 2.) A diversity planning workshop should be made available to all DAL managers, with the goal of enlisting their creativity and ideas and creating implementation plans for various organizational units.

- 3.) Mentoring and sponsoring are crucial parts of the people development process, and should be made more effective.
- 4.) The laboratory should develop a program designed to enhance its managers' ability to manage all people. Ideally, such a program should focus on the concepts, as well as the skills, of management and leadership.
- 5.) Existing management training programs should include significant blocks of time on managing diversity.
- 6.) DAL should establish, design, and conduct an annual conference on multi-cultural diversity. The conference would provide an opportunity to reorganize and reward visible accountability and progress in managing diversity (Thomas 67-132).

Beyond Race and Gender realizes the importance of unleashing the power of the total workforce by managing diversity. The androgynous management style is generalized in the Culberson case study to apply to all cultures with the results being that women along with all minorities have valuable contributions to be made to the organization. The communication barriers coupled with the traditional "doer" management style suffocates the desire for women and minorities to contribute to the organization. The book effectively deals with the face of the changing workplace and proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that all people must be allowed to participate within the organization for it to succeed in the upcoming years.

Communicating Effectively

A Complete Guide for Better Managing

by Susan Dellinger and Barbara Deane

It has already been established in earlier chapters that men and women communicate differently. Men tend to view communication as though operating

within a hierarchial social order. While on the other hand, women view communication as though operating within a complex of network of connections together. The book Communicating Effective, A Complete Guide for Better Managing is more or less considered a handbook that discusses the most basic communication techniques, such as active listening to a more complex communication situation as communication within a corporation.

Active listening is the key to knowing what people mean. Active listening greatly increases the chances of seeing and hearing the real message. It also increases the feedback to the sender. Feedback is essential to the sender's success in getting his/her message across, and helping him/her to clarify the message is only one of the things a good listening does. In order to become an active listener, one must learn to:

- 1.) Successfully block out competing messages.
- 2.) Concentrate intensely on the message sender.
- 3.) Be and act attentive.
- 4.) Listen in context.
- 5.) Give verbal and nonverbal feedback.
- 6.) Use perceptual checks (testing your perception against the speaker's intention).
- 7.) Distinguish between the cognitive (informational) and the affective (emotional) portions of the message and know how to listen to both.
- 8.) Exercise your inference-making ability.

The first four points are the easiest to accomplish. Blocking out competing messages and concentrating are relatively easy if you can guarantee a quiet environment. Attentive behavior encourages active listening. Usually this type of behavior can be accomplished by sitting alertly, leaning forward slightly and making eye contact (Dellinger & Dean 45-46).

The remaining keys for active listening I would like to expand on. The fact is that listening is such a large part of communication and in general people misjudge the importance because it is not verbal.

Feedback and Perceptual Checks

Speakers rely on their audience to let them know when their messages aren't getting through. Feedback can be in the form of head-nodding, noncommittal "uh-huhs," or "go on, I'd like to hear more." If the listener neglects giving the cues, the speaker will interpret this as a negative reaction. Usually if the speaker is not receiving feedback, he/she tends to clam up.

Through the perceptual check, a special type of feedback, a speaker can test their perception of the message against his or her intention. If the information seems fuzzy, conflicting or abstract, the speaker must stop and rephrase what he or she has just said. For example, "Let me be sure I understand you. Are you saying that this project must be completed by Friday?" If the sender agrees, the intent of the message is clarified. If the sender disagrees, then it becomes their responsibility to clarify.

Nonverbal Clues to Emotions

All messages have both cognitive (informational) and affective (emotional) content. Before reacting to a speaker the audience must first decide what they want to react to. Within the corporate environment it is often times difficult to read the

emotional content of messages. Usually the higher the status of the person or executive, the more skilled he or she becomes in hiding true feelings behind a smoke screen of seemingly rational messages. This is only one reason why men and women have difficulty co-existing within the present "traditional" corporate environment. When nonverbal and verbal messages conflict, the nonverbal message usually carries the emotion and is considered the true message. Often times a manager who wants to look "only at the facts" tends to forget that the way a worker feels about something is also part of the "facts." This is where miscommunication is prevalent in men managers and women subordinates. When men refuse to pick-up on nonverbal messages the woman feels ignored. This is only the basis for more miscommunication in the future.

Messages: Facts versus Fallacies

Many messages that appear to be fact are anything but. Since language can conceal as well as reveal meanings, it pays to cultivate a healthy skepticism while listening. Unfortunately, many messages contain common deceptions, like most listed below, that may or may not be intentional.

1.) Vagueness and Generalities

Some speakers manage to combine vagueness with the logical fallacy called "begging the question," inviting the listener to accept as true what remains to be proved. For example, "it is understood by people in the field that..." What is "well understood," and by whose definition? Who are these people? Many times these type of tactics are used to avoid responsibility.

2.) Verbal Overkill

Careful listening and questioning are essential to making a correct judgment. However, verbal overkill can allow something ordinary to be perceived as "fantastic." This communication techniques is ever present in advertising, all listeners expect an overstatement for example, "the movie of the century."

3.) Euphemisms

Euphemisms are socially useful words and phrases that cover up naked realities in order for them to fit into the meaning. If both the sender and receiver agree on the meaning of the euphemism, no harm is done. When the context of the euphemism gives one the feeling that its something inevitable and beyond their control that is when they can become harmful. An effective euphemism is especially skeptical about pleasant-sounding phrase whose meaning is vague. For example, referring to shoplifting as "inventory shrinkage."

Inference Making

An inference is similar to an assumption. Usually inference making statements can be supported by facts, but often times the statements are opinions with built-in judgements. These subjective messages would present few problems in communication if they didn't come to us disguised as informational, objective messages. In order to listen actively and to make sound judgements about what you hear, you have to become aware of the inferences people include within their statements. Often people think that they are reporting what they see and hear, but actually they are reporting their inferences (or assumptions), which may or may not

be accurate. There is certainly nothing wrong with inference-making, but you must be conscious of what you are listening to--facts or assumptions--in order to draw accurate conclusions.

These are just a few of the basic techniques of active listening that must be adapted by all associates within an organization. According to Dellinger and Deane, "the workforce has undertaken an enormous change with women entering the corporate environment, everyone must listen effectively in order for successful communication to take place" (Dellinger and Deane 51).

The Corporate Communications Game

The next area Dellinger and Deane speak of in detail is corporate communications. The success of an organization depends on how successful the communication is within the organization (Dellinger and Deane 80).

The organizational structure has traditionally been a hierarchy, symbolized by a pyramid. Its prototype is the military, where the chain of command descends by rank from general to troops. The higher you are on the pyramid, the higher your status, and the fewer positions at that level. Each level is separated from ones above and below it. The hierarchial organization and the structure defines the formal lines of communication that we must work with or against. The strongest flow of information within a hierarchial organization is in one direction--downward. The reason is simple: Your life on the job depends on understanding the messages from above. When an upper level "sends," you must be ready to receive. However, since decision-making at the top of the pyramid is dependent upon information from below, many companies actively seek to improve upward communication. Lateral communication also exists within an organization. Basically, lateral communication is

the exchange of information among those of relatively equal status in the hierarchy. It is usually more effective than upward communication, but not as effective as downward flow because of the competition between employees on the same range of the organizational ladder.

Men have been successful within a hierarchial organization because they prefer to communicate within the same structure. Women prefer complex networks to communicate within and have a better chance of finding them within lateral communication situations. However, miscommunication occurs within the organization amongst the associates when men don't adjust to lateral styles and women don't adjust to hierarchial styles. The middle ground is what I have been referring to as androgynous, not set rules or expectations from men or women just the opportunity for successful communication.

In order for successful communication to occur Dellinger and Deane suggest the organization must provide an atmosphere to do so. They suggest that there are four types of organizations in the corporate world and by having a basic understanding of how each function provides the individual with the knowledge to communicate effectively within them.

System One Organization

System one is similar to the hierarchial military model developed out of the specific needs of the 19th century.

System One involves:

- 1.) High tasks and production orientation
- 2.) Devaluing of the workers and the needs of the needs of the people.

- 3.) Strong emphasis on rules and regulations.
- 4.) Use of punishment, threats, and fear to make people produce.
- 5.) Strong maintenance of the hierarchial structure and direct line reporting.
- 6.) Decision making and vital information hoarded at the top.
- 7.) Communication almost exclusively downward.
- 8.) Authoritarian and autocratic leadership style starting at the executive level and copied throughout the organization.

System One seems to ignore the needs of people and the organization's responsibility to its workers. Organizations that continue to operate this way are probably much less productive than other organizational types. The average age of employees is over forty and there are few (if any) minorities or women in the managerial ranks. Although System One organizations break the most modern ideas about how organizations should be operated, it appears that at least one-third of American companies are closer to system one than to any of the others (Dellinger and Deane 92-93).

System Two Organization

As organizations become more concerned with their employees--usually as a result of the pressure of unions or government agencies some respond by moving toward a System Two approach.

System Two involves:

- 1.) Attempt to soften the emphasis on product and task orientation and promote people-orientation.
- 2.) Strong emphasis on improving working conditions, salary and benefits; addition of "human relations" training so that managers understand the needs of employees.
- 3.) Maintenance of rules, yet selective "bending" occurs.
- 4.) Widespread manipulation of employees through use of enticements such as promised advancements and glossy "public relations" recognition of good performance.
- 5.) Maintenance of hierarchy, but with increased knowledge and ability of top management to tap into informal networks.
- 6.) Decision-making still primarily at the top, but some minor decisions delegated downward.
- 7.) Communication flow primarily downward with some new projects introduced to encourage some upward flow.
- 8.) Leadership style quasi-democratic with emphasis on paternalism.

Basically System Two provides the employees with an image of having control of their work lives when in reality they don't. Certainly the working conditions and salaries are preferable, but the real motivator are still absent--the excitement of doing interesting and challenging work, of growing and learning and "stretching" oneself to do even better (Dellinger & Deane 93-98).

System Three Organization

System Three deals with the power of unleashing the capacity of all employees. System Three is more people oriented because the productivity of the company's work force depends on it.

System Three includes:

- 1.) Marked increase in concern for employees.
- 2.) Strong emphasis on evaluating the potential and interest of all employees so that they can be properly placed in interesting and challenging work; increased opportunities for movement within the organization, with both upward and lateral moves based on career paths designed by employees and assessment centers.
- 3.) Company policy and rules used more as general guidelines.
- 4.) Increased involvement of employees in decision making and increased delegation of authority and responsibility.
- 5.) General "softening" of the hierarchial structure, lessening of middle-management ranks, and emergence of project "teams" assigned to temporary job functions.
- 6.) Decision-making pushed down to levels where most information is available.
- 7.) Strong upward flow of communication through attitude surveys, upward communication program, viable suggests plans, visible management of top executives among worker ranks in the field.
- 8.) "Participative" leadership style, with employees encouraged to give input into decisions that will directly affect their jobs.

Although most organizations operate under System Two, some departments or pockets within them seem to approach the more people-orientated structures of System Three (Dellinger & Deane 100). It is with this system that women and minority employees are utilized. This is the system that organizations must work towards for in System One and Two women as well as other minorities are left as "untapped" resources which eventually will lead to detriment of the organization.

System Four Organization

System Four is considered the ideal organization, and actually has not broken through the corporate environment as of yet.

System Four includes:

- 1.) Negation of the hierarchial structure; strong "team" management used.
- 2.) Emphasis on functional management, rather than task or people. Work is organized by functions and projects which are constantly changing as the market and employees change.
- 3.) Division of labor from boss/subordinates (management and workers) to project "teams" with a group of "equals" assigned to complete a project.
- 4.) Emergence of the concept of "matrix teams." Individual jobs are determined by assignments to several different functional teams. An individual may work on several teams at one team.
- 5.) High value is placed on worker autonomy and initiative: the individual employee charts his/her own "career path," sets his/her own goals, and becomes a full partner in decisions which result from "project" teams.
- 6.) Standardized corporate rules and policy are minimal. Employees set their own standards, operate on flexible hours, evaluate team members' contributions to the effort, share in the profits of the organization on the basis of the contribution of their team.
- 7.) Decision-making is relatively equally shared throughout the organization. Top management's function is largely one of long-range planning for the corporation as a whole.
- 8.) Communication flow within the organization is excellent, particularly laterally. Due to the elimination of pyramid concepts, upward and downward communication are much less applicable (Dellinger & Deane 101).

System Four is obviously the organization of the future. It provides an environment for all employees to grow and flourish, it allows the opportunity for personal as well as corporate goals to be achieved.

In this Chapter, I reviewed two books, Beyond Race and Gender and Communicating Effectively, A Guide for Managing, one of which discussed a specific managerial role "managing diversity" and the other, successful communication techniques for the corporate environment. The issues discussed in this chapter are the tools necessary for successfully managing men and women (including all minorities) in the future. The androgynous technique of "managing diversity" coupled with effective communication within a positive System Three or Four environment is the combination for successful organizations in the future.



Chapter IV: Results

As a nation, we can no longer do business in the 90's the way we did in the 80's if we want to be globally competitive as we move toward the gateway to the 21st century.

The face of the American work force is changing drastically. By year 2000, it has been forecast that women and other minorities will comprise the largest portion of the incoming work force (Buhler 22). In reality, the changes in the work force have already begun are affecting us all. Basically the number of traditional white American males entering the work force is shrinking.

To take a reactionary position of this shift in the workforce may mean you will be left behind. It is important in today's dynamic environment to staff organizations with those who will appropriately challenge the status quo. Innovation and creativity are the ingredients for survival in the future. The most significant ramifications for managers when addressing the changing work force lies in the needs of the workers. As the workers change, so will their needs. These very differences in our workers will enrich our organizations--if we only respond now and take advantage of these wonderful differences.

One of the most obvious obstacles of utilizing the entire workforce is the different communication styles of men and women. In order to establish a successful working environment men as well as women must comprehend the communication process of themselves, more importantly of one another. As stated earlier men tend to communicate as though operating within a hierarchial social order ("How the Other Half Works" 21). They tend to view conversations as negotiations while pursuing their independence. Women, on the other hand, communicate as though operating

within a complex network of connections (Tannen 38). Women tend to view life as a community, they want to establish connections while avoiding isolation ("How the Other Half Works" 21).

Other obstacles that exist within the organization deal more with the manager(s). They are the individuals that need intensive, skill based training because they are the key group--the one that sets the tone for the organization.

The management training needs to address three important issues:

- 1.) The need for managers to be concerned about diversity; namely, demographics, organizational benefits, and reflections on their own managing effectiveness.
- 2.) The problems that arise when diversity is not adequately managed; namely, high turnover, reduced productivity, poor attitude, workplace dress, and poor communication.
- 3.) Most important, what it is that manager need to know to manage diversity.

The following is a list of skills and abilities that managers need to acquire in order to manage diversity successfully. At present these skills are not being used in day to day work situations, therefore, becoming obstacles for the organization due to the ever changing workforce.

- explicit understanding of the assumptions, norms, and social techniques that form the basis of the managers own culture.
- understanding of the manager's own biases and stereotypical assumptions about others, and how these affect decision making.
- Interpersonal communication and listening skills geared to those from other cultures for the female worker.
- awareness of the organization's unwritten rules of success and the skill to communicate them to all employees.

- team building skills with which to manage conflicts, develop cohesion, and enhance communication between all employees.
- work-climate transforming skills with which to make ambiance conducive to diversity.
- patience: there are no quick fixes or lazy answers in managing diversity.

When these techniques and approaches are utilized, they are no longer considered obstacles of the organization. These abilities are the solution for effective managing diversification that becomes demystified. With demystification comes reduced fear and misunderstanding, along with enhanced communication and productivity for all employees.

A diverse workforce, that is one that provides all qualified employees with the same opportunities and is managed by androgynous individuals that can successfully communicate with not only themselves but with one another, is the organization of the future. A diverse work force provides a broader perspective and is considered an organizational asset that often times provides a competitive edge in consumer business. Now is the time for American corporations to position themselves not just to cope with, but to leverage the benefits of, this diverse, dramatically changing work force.

Chapter V: Discussion

It seems inevitable if not obvious, that a diverse work force will be the norm in the very near future. Being committed to dealing with that very fact is the first step in managing diversity. Although managing diversity seems simple enough on paper, it may take years to implement successfully.

The guideline(s) listed in Chapter IV. seem obvious initiatives that must be set in place; however, changing a corporate culture requires an enormous undertaking by all employees for it often involves "reprogramming" communication conditioning established in childhood. Everyone learns to communicate at a very young age and at a very young age the "gender gap" is introduced to both males and females. Boys are allowed to play with trucks and get dirty while girls are to be in the kitchen and taught to be neat and clean. This very "gender gap" continues to grow throughout our lives--unless a reactionary stance is taken to realize that men and women communicate differently. In taking this stance and realizing why we communicate as we do the "gender gap" can be lessened, and more importantly, men and women can appreciate one another's communication style, adapt appropriately and in the end, communicate more effectively.

It seems that the larger the organization the harder to implement changes. Basically, if an employee feels trapped and unchallenged their attitude to change is not fully participative. It is not an easy task to make all employees feel needed; however, immediate management does have this ability if only they learn to communicate effectively.

For example, I recently experienced a business meeting at the organization where I am employed. The meeting consisted of one male manager, five female

employees, and eight male employees. All of the employees carry the same responsibility--in essence, the same performance is expected from everyone. The meeting lasted several hours and more or less threatened everyone's job unless performance was improved by all employees. The meeting was dictated to us. We had little chance to interject with suggestions, feedback or even questions. Both men and women expressed their desire to speak; however, the men were allowed and the women were pushed aside and told, "If you have anymore comments, come see me (the manager) in private and he would address them." The meeting ended with this comment, " I don't know why all of you have to shove a size eleven up your ass to perform above average." I was literally appalled, not only did I not appreciate the verbiage, I didn't appreciate the implication of this man having to kick me in the buttocks to do my job.

The feelings of emotion I felt after this meeting ranged from complete anger to total disrespect for the manager conducting the meeting. After the meeting was over I did choose to speak with him. I explained my fear of losing my job if I didn't perform up to the set standards. His response was, "Dara, this meeting was not aimed at you, don't worry about it." I swiftly stood up, taking the more authoritative stance and expressed my feelings for the future: that if a meeting "was not aimed" at me I didn't want to be present.

The entire month was tense for all of the employees--men and women. It made no difference because we all wanted to keep our jobs. By the end of the month, only two employees made the objective and no one lost their job; however, one person did quit. I had the opportunity to sit in on her exit interview and she simply stated she did not want to be threatened to perform and did not appreciate the

management style of the individual to whom she reported. The fact is that the organization lost a valuable employee; as for the manager, he was promoted to the organization's headquarters for his "excellent management abilities." His new position involves training new managers on the tactics for getting employees to improve their performance.

Although this may sound like a joke I assure you it is not. Obviously there was some very poor communication and management techniques present. I truly feel that threatening employees is not the way to motivate them; furthermore, the meeting did not produce the desired results. Not allowing the women to express their feelings in a group situation is practically discriminatory. This example proves that the organization I work for has not completely grasped the entire concept of managing diversity. Although the manager in question did use an unorthodox, time-honored technique of intimidation to motivate his employees, I do not completely blame him. I tend to believe that is the way he was managed. He learned it from the organization and now he is in the position to teach it to other managers.

This scenario does not only occur at my organization, it happens throughout the nation. With the work force changing so drastically it is not only preferable, it is necessary to change the way that organizations operate. First women, as well as other minorities, must be allowed to function to their potential--they are the untapped resource that will allow an organization to grow and flourish and not be left behind. The communication barriers must be overcome so that all employees can work together for a common goal. Lastly, managing by diversity will allow all of this to happen if the realization of the changing work force is taken seriously and a conscious effort is made by both men and women to communicate effectively with one another.

Outside Feedback

I selected feedback from the only woman manager in my office. Her name is Dawn Smith and she has been with the organization for about four years. In that time she has been promoted three times, most recently out of her management position and into a regional training position. She is small in stature and has been referred to as "plain Jane" in appearance. Her nick name while she was in her management position was "little Hitler." She had the reputation of being business minded and not "fooling around" on company time. Needless to say, she is a fairly intense person.

Her feedback was straight forward and immediate. We discussed her comments outside of work because she claimed she was too busy between eight and five. Her first reaction to my paper was not complimentary. She stated that I was "looking in from the outside" because I had not yet been a manager and walked in their shoes, so to speak. Acknowledging, that I had never been in management, I also pointed out that I had worked for several different managers, changing not only my work style but my communication style as well. Much of Dawn's feedback was given in the hierarchically based manager to a subordinate style. It took a while for her to let down her guard and comment on her specific situation of being the only woman manager in the St. Louis office.

Once her guard was dropped, she said "she had to learn the hard way." She was referring to having been the first woman manager. She had no mentors to guide her. She claimed to have been treated as an equal, but only after she had proven herself. "I changed my style of communicating..." she reported, "I had to be less

wordy, I stated my point and waited for feedback because that is how men communicate." She agreed that my analysis of the different communication styles of men and women is accurate as well as with the notion of "gender gap."

When talking about management, she choose to defend our organization. She stated how hard it is to motivate employees. "We pay them well and in order for the organization to benefit, you have to ride them hard." I asked her if she found a difference in managing men versus women. Her reply was this: managing them is the same, it's how they take "orders" from their manager that is different. "I had an easier time with compliance from women; men tended not to take instruction, criticism, or positive feedback well from me, which in return put me on the defensive and I rode that employee harder." Dawn admitted that her technique was rough but she also included that she was "paving a new road" for our organization. Dawn stated that the communication problem she experienced with the male employees was their communication problem and not hers. She felt that the male employees had problems seeing a woman in an authority position.

Dawn stated the "managing diversity" is the wave of the future and that as a regional trainer she needs to incorporate the ideals associated with the technique to all employees. She also stated that with an organization as large as ours "managing diversity" could take decades. As for the changing work force, she said she hopes that changes are made with our organization to accommodate all employees' needs. She did point out that our pregnancy leave is from the dark ages. As it stands, you receive one week paid for every year you have been with the company up to six weeks. Dawn agreed with me that women employees are still viewed as not being as dedicated after having a baby.

Overall, Dawn agreed with the paper, but stated she didn't appreciate the example made earlier in this chapter about the male manager. Obviously she knew who I was referring to. She stated that although this looks good on paper, change is hard to implement in an organization. Dawn commented on the women's role within the organization: "We have to work twice as hard to prove ourselves. I had to change my communication style. I had to sacrifice friendships to get where I am today and in retrospect I'm not very proud of that. It seems only fair that men should change, be more open-minded to the changing work force, although that may take awhile, I'm here for the entire ride."

Dawn tended to focus on herself through her feedback, her guard was almost always intact. However, she did provide me with a perfect example of how a woman must change to fit within the existing corporate culture that inhibits the majority of organizations today.

Hopefully, in the future as the work force changes, women won't have to work twice as hard to prove themselves. The ideal of managing diversity will be the norm and organizations will provide an equal motivating and productive environment for all employees. As more women enter the work force, men will have to adapt change in how they communicate. They will have to learn about themselves as well as one another.

Criticism

The biggest and most frequent criticism I received was that this idea looked good on paper but would be hard to implement because people don't like change. I agree on the latter. Change is hard because it forces people to think and look at things from a different point of view. However, I presented this ideal on the premise

that change is inevitable. I have presented with detail, facts that the work force is changing and women are becoming the majority of employees within organizations; therefore, change has already started to occur. In order for change to be fully adopted with the least amount of casualties, men and women must learn how they communicate and how one another communicates. If this issue is dealt with head on, managing diversity will naturally follow. Looking at the organization as a whole is great but individuals make up that organization and individuals are different. Treating the individuals within an organization as the same is the first step to failure. The organization must realize that the individuals are different and communicate the goals, benefits and expectations appropriately in order for that organization to succeed. I realize change is not immediate and this is an on going process, just as it is with new employees constantly entering any organization.

Another criticism I feel victim of is grouping managers together and blaming them for the corporate culture. My intent was not to place blame but to establish a guideline for communicating between men and women in the corporate situation. I admit the realm of my corporate experience is limited and that I have yet to be a manager, however I commented on my personal experience thus far as a woman in the corporate world. I feel that for my comments not to be taken seriously in itself reflects the basis for the much needed change in our country's organizations. The fact is simple: women must be heard and understood and encouraged to participate within the organization in order for it to succeed in the future.

I believe that the research I have compiled can be used as a beneficial tool for individual and corporate dynamics included in mixed-gender situations. I have addressed such issues as:

- 1.) How women affect and influence group behavior.
- 2.) The impact women will have on male-dominated groups.
- 3.) The changes in perception of women in the workplace over the past twenty years.
- 4.) Proven that women in male-dominated groups have less satisfaction and do not perform as well.
- 5.) Communication problems begin at an early age and that is how the "gender gap" begins.
- 6.) How token women are viewed as being less feminine.
- 7.) How our country's organizations must change to include all employees-managing diversity.
- 8.) Women are an asset to an organization and the benefits outweigh the costs.

Another fault brought to my attention was the scope of the work environment is changing to minimize the rule of management. The recent cut in middle management has been ever so apparent in all companies throughout the nation. The argument was this: how can a manager change his or her style when the role of the manager is undertaking its own change? I truly believe that, here again, change is the key word. Middle management is being cut for a variety of reasons ranging from economic situations to the changing work force. I was still accused of being narrow minded in to prove my point throughout this paper. I was introduced to the idea that if middle-management was being cut that "self-directed teams" could take their place. Basically a self-directed team is a group of individuals that work together without an

immediate manager to guide them. The premise behind the teams is the more responsibility the employee has for the success of the team the better the result will be. Though this discussion did not focus explicitly on the self-directed team, the ideal of managing diversity dealt with individuals working toward a common goal as does the self-directed team. Self-directed teams still are made up of individuals that are different and have different needs that need to be addressed. The fact that self-directed teams will be a mixed gender group goes back to the first premise men and women must learn to communicate effectively with one another. Small group communication will be a large part of self-directed teams. The success of these teams will largely be in the understanding of the various roles an individual can portray with a small group communication situation.

Although never mentioned, the change I have been speaking of is already taking place. Many organizations throughout the nation have already experienced the changing work force. In order to make the adjustment many fortune 500 companies have already developed re-training and communication programs for all employees including managers. Taking these small steps now will allow the organization to move forward in leaps and bounds in the future.

Overall, the criticism I received was appropriate as well as minimal. I believe the reason for the latter is that people realize that organizations will have to change in order to meet the needs of the individuals that are directly accountable for the success of the organization. What my respondents agree with in my discussion, I truly feel that people within organizations have the opportunity to seize change but allow the opportunity to pass by because they do not want to challenge the status quo.

Everyone within an organization wants to feel as though they fit in, and unfortunately,

challenging the status quo is something that is often times frowned upon in today's organization. I still believe accepting the ideal of change is the first step to becoming a successful participant in the organization of the future.

Future Research

The future of this topic has yet to unfold. The change I spoke of so often throughout the project is just now taking place. I feel that women have taken giant steps in proving their "corporate image" over the past twenty years. I look forward to being a part of the changes that will occur within the next twenty years. In reality I have already been a part of the changing corporate environment. I have taken a proactive stance on communication and decided to be informed on all dimensions of the process. I have dedicated my educational experience on becoming a more informed communicator. I hope in the future that I can analyze an entire study on managing diversity. I would like to view the process from beginning to end with an actual company dedicated to change. I would like to have the opportunity to interview actual participants--men and women--and compare the different view points on the change. In all probability I will experience this change if I continue to be part of the corporate structure.

I have made a promise to myself to educate others on communicating effectively and managing diversity when given the opportunity. I will no longer allow educational situations pass by in order to feel part of the group. I want to challenge the status quo enough to make others think about what types of change could possibly occur within the organization.

I look forward to the day that people within organizations are treated as individuals and their needs are addressed in the same manner. I can foresee

miscommunication still happening but the participants in the conversation will have a better idea of why miscommunication is happening and how to correct it. I believe that women will no longer hit the "glass ceiling" but will be able to grow as much as they choose within an organization. Effective communication is the primary skill needed to adjust to any work situation. Adjusting to and learning from will allow a woman to climb as high on the corporate ladder as she chooses.

All in all, developing this culminating project has enabled me to gain not only the knowledge of the communication process of men and women within the corporate environment, but also the tools necessary to succeed in that same environment. Having the knowledge that change is inevitable is the first step for me to accept the change that will occur within the workplace. Also being able to communicate effectively in one to one situations or group situations with men and women will assist in my communicating effectively given any situation. I now feel confident that I have a basic understanding of why women have experienced problems in the work place in the past. I realize that communication is the key to understanding the needs of all employees and that all employees must be viewed as individuals with individual needs (managing diversity). By understanding the communication structures of both men and women along with the changes taking place in organizations throughout the nation, I will be able to understand the changes and succeed within those organizations.

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