



# The Basics of Communication: A Relational Perspective

By Steve W. Duck, David T. McMahan

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Written in a warm and lively style and packed with learning tools, **The Basics of Communication** offers an engaging look at the inseparable connection between relationships and communication. Steve Duck and David T. McMahan combine theory and application to introduce students to fundamental communication concepts. Their book also provides practical instruction on communicating interpersonally, in groups, in interviews and on making effective presentations. The authors encourage students to think critically, to link communication theory to their own experiences, and to improve their communication skills in the process.

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## **The Basics of Communication: A Relational Perspective** By Steve W. Duck, David T. McMahan **Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #305697 in Books
- Brand: Brand: SAGE Publications, Inc
- Published on: 2011-01-05
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: .72" h x 8.03" w x 9.93" l, 2.01 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 472 pages

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

"The relational theme that the authors set up as a the novelty in an introductory textbook is what would prompt me to adopt it. . . . Something that makes this textbook different is the personal approach that Duck and McMahan use. They address the students as if they were talking to them. . . . Furthermore, the family communication and identity chapters are very appealing and not a common feature among textbooks."

(David Chronet-Roses )

"Every chapter presents a variety of materials and issue from communication, psychology, sociology, applied linguistics, and other social sciences and humanities. I have never seen such an interdisciplinary-oriented textbook." (Masahiro Masuda )

"It is a fresh, new approach that will make conversations with students quite rich!" (Erin Sahlstein )

"Duck and McMahan's attempt to integrate a relational component to all communication contexts cleverly integrates communication, theory and practice, with psychology, theory and practice."

(Michael Elkins )

"This is an excellent text for the instructor frustrated with simple and simplistic renderings of communication as merely the skill of self-expression. It challenges both the instructor and the students to set aside what they have been taught by their culture and their media and to reconsider why we think of communication in individualistic terms and how that dominant framework shapes the relationships we engage and maintain."

(Lance Brendan Young )

"This book is entertaining yet relevant, helps instructors connect with their students, and demonstrates the significance of communication as both everyday performance and scholarly endeavor."

(Branislav Kovacic )

"This text is really the first to take advantage of theory and research that focus on the role of communication, relating, and dialogue in everyday life. The central strength is the focus on the 'dynamic betweenness' of human communication, and how communication, relationships, and social structures are constituted and reconstituted in everyday life." (Larry Erbert )

I would welcome the opportunity to use this text based on the conversational writing style of the authors, the balance between theory and application of this information to daily relationships, and the end of chapter features for discussion. (Ann Marie Jablonowski )

"An in-depth basic communication text with easy to understand examples for each topic area."

(Quinton Davis )

"I think that this may be the best book on the basics of communication in terms of organization and relationship between theory and reality, bravo to the authors for their fine work." (Brian Cogan )

"Specific applications allow students to experience the theories. This facilitates learning and allows students to improve their communication competencies." (Kevin Cummings )

"This text provides a fantastic combination of engaging students while challenging them to think about their lives, and communication, in an insightful way. There are several outlets for the students to apply their new ideas and theories in an environment that guides them to understanding." (Tracy Routsong )

"This refreshing intro text is readable and interesting with comprehensive coverage." (Pam Secklin )

The strengths of this text are the real world examples, interactive features, and humble mode of address through narrative and self-disclosure. (Robert Bodle )

"A comprehensive hybrid text that includes features that will resonate with multiple learning needs." (Annette Holba )

"**The Basics of Communication: A Relational Perspective** is more than a basic textbook. This book is an excellent hybrid for those professors who like to introduce basic communication concepts and theory to students along with some instruction on giving presentations." (Laura Oliver )

"Duck and McMahan have done everything in their power to compose a textbook that is not only thorough and informative, but which students will also be able to REALLY relate to." (Thomas Harkins )

"The strengths of this book include the ease of reading, relevant examples and everyday experiences used to help explain concepts, and the discussion of the various 'selves' or ways in which we perform identity." (Lori Johnson )

"This book is written in a conversational tone and incorporates many recent research findings in the chapter, and it also provides some useful classroom activities." (Yinjiao Ye )

"It is a well written and comprehensive introductory treatment of key issues in communication studies." (Rick Olsen )

"Students should be able to relate readily to this book with its easy to understand writing style which doesn't get bogged down in the author's own sense of self-importance." (Richard West )

"Duck and McMahan have a text that explains to students basic theories and practices of the communication discipline in a manner that reflects the communication experiences these students have encountered in their daily lives. This is more than a book of theoretical ideas and practical advice; it is a book that tells the students 'this is what it means for you.'" (David Tschida )

"The writing is crisp, clear, serious, jocular, and nuanced with simplicity and complexity. And all this at the same time! The authors' voice comes through beautifully."

(Avinash Thombre )

"Excellent! The authors were able to convey exactly the description of the course I try to teach!!" (Jeffrey Pierson )

"Thorough, appropriate for the diversity of our population." (Jean Dewitt )

The writing style of the Duck/McMahan textbook is more conversational and in first person, welcoming an informal style where one can relate. . . . I like how it uses examples that relates to everyday life. . . . It invites me to learn new things about the inner self and others around you. I like how it intertwines sociological and psychological concepts along with the idea of communication. (Student )

Key strengths include good comparisons, such as the onion, to model the idea of revealing ourselves to others; informative and thoroughly explains concepts so students can understand key terms; excellent end of chapter features to help students analyze what they have just learned from the chapter. (Student )

It was like I was having a conversation with my textbook. I for once understood what the text was saying, and wanted to continue reading further. It did not seem like a chore to have read. I learned a lot about the chapter and also about myself as I read this chapter! (Student )

This really doesn't seem like a textbook! It's something easy to read and understand. It's also not one of those textbooks where you dread reading it and put it off till the last minute. I know that if this was my new textbook I would read it first because you are gaining a lot of valuable information. (Student )

It is much easier to relate to than my current text book is. It seems as if it was written with the students in mind. (Student )

I felt that it challenged me to learn more about what an identity is and to understand the definitions of your symbolic self, accountability self accountability, etc.

(Student )

I think even students outside of the communication field can appreciate the information and how it applies in their life. (Student )

This is a book that I would ask my instructor to use in the course. . . . It relates to all audiences and gives real life examples. (Student )

The tone and up-to-date examples and ideas concerning cell phones, Facebook, Brad Pitt, and Hillary Clinton made it 'survive-able'. Reading a textbook isn't my favorite activity, but the cutback on technical language and terms and more description and examples made it easy to understand. (Student )

I like the media links the most - that is a way I have not seen. It is very easy to relate what the text is talking

about and so it is easier to understand. (Student )

This book I believe has great insight in self-identity and as well as communication with others, it is elaborate and concise. It also gives great picture caption and visual text better than some of the text books that I am using in college today. (Student )

It changed the way I look at identity! Duck and McMahan are way more fun to read than my current text. (Student )

I think that it was much more user friendly and 'kind' to the reader and actually made you want to read the text, not just scan it for the information that you needed and put it aside again. (Student )

#### About the Author

**David T. McMahan** has taught courses that span the discipline of communication, including numerous courses in interpersonal communication, media, communication education, theory, and criticism. David's research interests also engage multiple areas of the discipline with much of his research devoted to bridging the study of relationships and media. This work includes examining the discussion of media and the incorporation of catchphrases and media references in everyday communication. A great deal of research has been derived from his experiences in the classroom and his commitment to education. His early work in this area focused on communication competence, self-conception, and assessment. His focus has since shifted toward topics that include both media and relationships, such as contradictions within advisor-advisee relationships and discussions of media in the classroom. His diverse research experiences include studies on symbolic displays of masculinity and violence in rural America, media-based political transformations of the world's nation-states, *The New York Times'* reporting of mass-murder suicide, and primetime animated series. His work has appeared in such journals as *Review of Communication*, *Communication Education*, and *Communication Quarterly*, as well as edited volumes. A member of the Central States Communication Association, Eastern Communication Association, Iowa Communication Association, National Communication Association, Southern States Communication Association, Speech Communication Association of Puerto Rico, and Western States Communication Association, David has served numerous roles within these organizations. He has received multiple awards for his work in the classroom and has been the recipient of a number of public service and academic distinctions, most recently being named a Centennial Scholar by the Eastern Communication Association. He hopes to someday appear on an updated version of *Tic Tac Dough* and beat the dragon.

Steve Duck taught at two universities in the United Kingdom before taking up the Daniel and Amy Starch Distinguished Research Chair in the Department of Communication Studies at the University of Iowa in 1986, where he is also an adjunct professor of psychology. He was recently promoted to Collegiate Administrative Fellow and works with the deans' caucus in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and as an extension of this position for 2010-2011 he has been appointed interim chair of the Rhetoric Department. He has taught several interpersonal communication courses, mostly on interpersonal communication and relationships but also on nonverbal communication, communication in everyday life, construction of identity, communication theory, organizational leadership, and procedures and practices for leaders. Always, by training, an interdisciplinary thinker, Steve has focused on the development and decline of relationships from many different perspectives, although he has also done research on the dynamics of television production techniques and persuasive messages in health contexts. Steve has written or edited 50 books on relationships and other matters and was the founder and, for the first 15 years, the editor of the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*. His 1994 book *Meaningful Relationships: Talking, Sense, and Relating* won the G. R. Miller Book Award from the Interpersonal Communication Division of the National Communication Association. Steve cofounded a series of international conferences on personal relationships that began in

1982. He won the University of Iowa's first Outstanding Faculty Mentor Award in 2001 and the National Communication Association's Robert J. Kibler Memorial Award in 2004 for "dedication to excellence, commitment to the profession, concern for others, vision of what could be, acceptance of diversity, and forthrightness." He was the 2010 recipient of the UI College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Helen Kechriotis Nelson Teaching Award for a lifetime of excellence in teaching. He was elected in 2010 as one of the National Communication Association's elite Distinguished Scholars. He hopes to someday appear on *The X Factor* and be famous.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Timothy Duchene:**

As people who live in the particular modest era should be change about what going on or info even knowledge to make all of them keep up with the era that is always change and advance. Some of you maybe will update themselves by looking at books. It is a good choice to suit your needs but the problems coming to you is you don't know what kind you should start with. This *The Basics of Communication: A Relational Perspective* is our recommendation to cause you to keep up with the world. Why, because book serves what you want and wish in this era.

#### **Penny Laughlin:**

This *The Basics of Communication: A Relational Perspective* is great guide for you because the content and that is full of information for you who all always deal with world and have to make decision every minute. This book reveal it data accurately using great arrange word or we can say no rambling sentences included. So if you are read the item hurriedly you can have whole details in it. Doesn't mean it only gives you straight forward sentences but tricky core information with lovely delivering sentences. Having *The Basics of Communication: A Relational Perspective* in your hand like obtaining the world in your arm, info in it is not ridiculous one. We can say that no publication that offer you world throughout ten or fifteen second right but this e-book already do that. So , this is certainly good reading book. Hey there Mr. and Mrs. active do you still doubt in which?

#### **Chi Reyes:**

The book untitled *The Basics of Communication: A Relational Perspective* contain a lot of information on that. The writer explains the girl idea with easy way. The language is very simple to implement all the people, so do definitely not worry, you can easy to read the idea. The book was compiled by famous author. The author provides you in the new period of literary works. It is possible to read this book because you can continue reading your smart phone, or model, so you can read the book inside anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can wide open their official web-site in addition to order it. Have a nice examine.

**Patricia Whetsel:**

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