

COM310-902

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Chapter 4



Analyzing Your Audience and Purpose



Overview

Understanding
audience and
purpose

Using an
audience
profile sheet

Techniques for
learning about
your audience

Communicating
across cultures

Applying what
you have
learned about
your audience

Writing for
multiple
audiences

Determining
your purpose

Understand audience and purpose:


- Projects succeed only if they are based on an accurate understanding of the audience and have a clear, focused purpose.
- In this course, you will need to consider as your audience not only your instructor, but also the audiences specified in your assignments.
- Your *purpose* refers to what you want to accomplish with the document you are producing.

Ask yourself three questions to help determine your purpose:

What do I want this document to accomplish?

What do I want readers to know or believe after they have this document?

What do I want readers to do?



Determine four important characteristics of your audience:

- Who are your readers?
- Why is your audience reading your document?
- What are your readers' attitudes and expectations?
- How will your readers use your document?

Techniques for learning about your audience:

- Determine what you already know about your audience.
- Interview people.
- Read about your audience online.
- Search social media for documents your audience has written.
- Analyze social-media data.





Consider six factors about each of your most important readers:

1. Educational background
2. Professional experience
3. Job responsibility
4. Cultural characteristics
5. Personal characteristics
6. Reading, speaking, and listening preferences



Classify your readers into three categories:

- A *primary audience* of people to whom the communication is directed
- A *secondary audience* of people who will not directly act on or respond to the document but need to be aware of it
- A *tertiary audience* of people who might take an interest in the document

Multiple Audiences (*primary, secondary, tertiary*)

Modular structure with a list of contents:

- Executive summary (managers who do not have time nor knowledge)
- Full technical discussion (for the experts)
- *optional* Financial plan (budget officers)

Your readers have attitudes and expectations:

Attitudes toward
you

Attitudes toward
the subject

Expectations
about the
document



How will your readers use your document?

- How will the reader read your document?
- What is the reader's reading skill level?
- What is the physical environment in which the reader will read your document?
- What digital platform will the reader use to read your document?

Understand seven categories of cultural variables that lie "on the surface":

Political

Economic

Social

Religious

Educational

Technological

Linguistic

Understand five cultural variables that lie “beneath the surface”:

Focus on
individuals or
groups

Distance
between
business life and
private life

Distance
between ranks

Need for details
to be spelled out

Attitudes toward
uncertainty

Keep in mind four points about cultural variables “beneath the surface”:



1. Each variable represents a spectrum of attitudes.
2. The variables do not line up in a clear pattern.
3. Different organizations within the same culture can vary greatly.
4. An organization's cultural attitudes are fluid, not static.

Follow these eight guidelines when writing for readers from other cultures:



Limit your
vocabulary



Keep sentences
short



Define
abbreviations
and acronyms in
a glossary



Avoid jargon
unless you know
your readers are
familiar with it

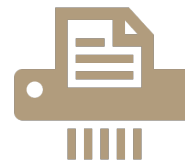
(cont.):



Avoid idioms and slang.



Use the active voice whenever possible.

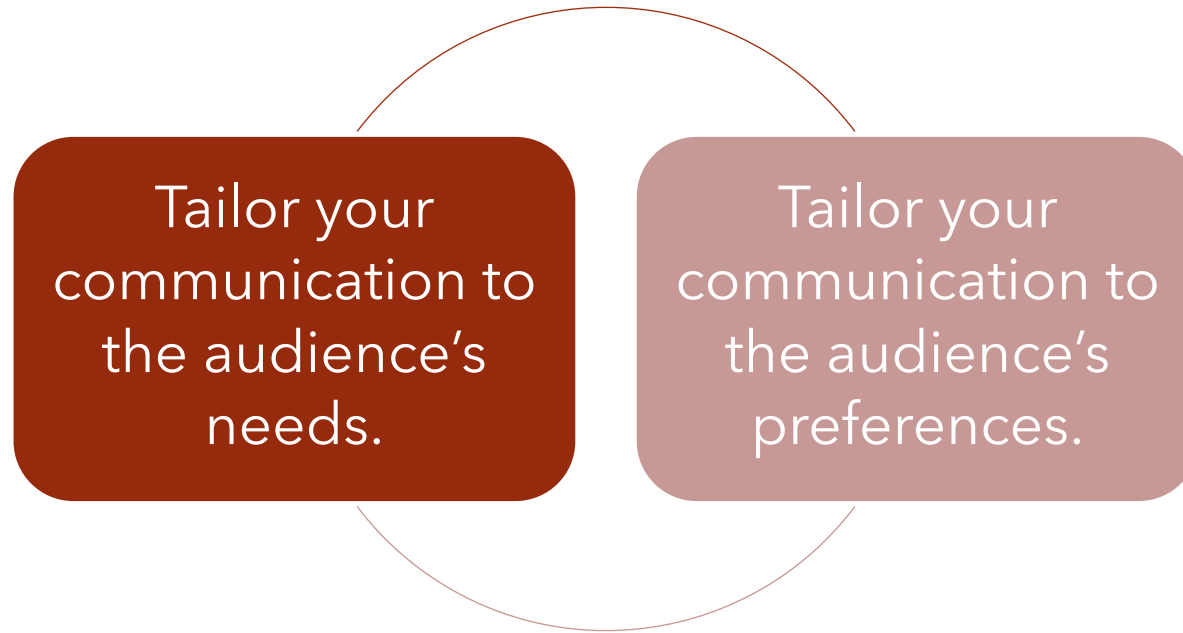


Be careful with graphics.



Be sure someone from the target culture reviews your document.

Apply what you learn about your audience:



**** Please navigate to the discussion board for Week 2 in our course portal to participate in this activity.**