



## *International Journal of Business Communication Newsletter*

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**In this month's newsletter**

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### **ABC in Miami**

October is an exciting month. First, there are many *IJBC* relevant activities at the Association for Business Communication 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual International Conference in Miami, FL (October 24<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>). Second, if you haven't yet had a chance to read the October issue of *IJBC*, we hope you investigate the excellent articles soon. We provide the abstracts later in this newsletter which also celebrates a new reviewer in the spotlight. We hope to see everyone in Miami!



### **Reviewer Spotlight**

In this month's reviewer spotlight we recognize Dr. Jef Naidoo who also is a frequent contributor to *IJBC*.



Jef Naidoo, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Management and the Derrell Thomas Faculty Fellow in the Culverhouse College of Business at the University of Alabama. Prior to this, Jef worked at EY Consulting as a senior consultant specializing in business reengineering and technology. His research focuses on opening up new perspectives and provoking thought about the pervasive employment of advanced technologies and artificial intelligence in the practice and advancement of management communication processes, and how to leverage decision-modeling and architect intuitive interfaces for communicating data-driven insights to support organizational business intelligence objectives. Most recently, he was the principal investigator on a grant from Lockheed Martin Corporation to develop a prototype for a business intelligence dashboard.

### **Approach to Evaluating an Article**

“I take it you’re here about your essay?” a voice commanded from somewhere between the stately oak bookcases and antique books. Minutes earlier I had received my grade for my first essay in college – a “C”. “Excruciatingly vapid and uninspired”, his comments had read. Overcome with shock and disbelief, I marched straight over to his office, anger welling up inside me.

He continued: “We need very strong ears to hear ourselves judged frankly, and because there are few who can endure frank criticism without being stung by it, those who venture to criticize us perform a remarkable act of friendship, for to undertake to wound or offend a man for his own good is to have a healthy love for him.” (He would later tell me that he had quoted *Michel de Montaigne*). He didn’t change my grade, but that day, he changed my heart.

Fast-forward to today, this is how I have come to view my role as a reviewer. I see it as a remarkable act of friendship that manifests in an acknowledgment of the favorable aspects of the material under review, identification of the deficient aspects *constructively*, and the provision of an easy-to-navigate roadmap to addressing the identified gaps without compromising the intellectual independence and freedom of the author(s). Courtesy and consideration drives my approach because every author deserves this.

### **The October 2018 Issue of *IJBC***

We are happy to announce the latest *IJBC* issue which examines a diversity of topics. To give you a peek into the contents we present the article abstracts.

*Humor Style Clusters: Exploring Managerial Humor*

Thomas Rhys Evans, Gail Steptoe-Warren

The current study is the first to explore the relationships between managerial humor and workplace facets using cluster analysis. Two-hundred and two employed adults rated their managers' humor and workplace facets online. K-means cluster analyses identified three managerial humor clusters, mostly replicating those found in the existing literature. A significant pattern of differences in stress, communication, creativity, perceptions of leader power, and job satisfaction were found between the clusters. Findings suggest negative humor use is most likely to be damaging to organizations when not used alongside positive humor types, and it is not merely the frequency with which a manager uses an individual humor type, but the holistic view of their humor, which is of importance in gauging valence of organizational facets. Using cluster analysis was beneficial in challenging assumptions from the existing literature, further contextualizing our understanding of humor and reinforcing the importance of humor use in the workplace.

*Full- and Part-Time Dissent: Examining the Effect of Employment Status on Dissent Expression*

Jeffrey W. Kassing, Shea A. Fanelli, Laasya Chakravarthy

This study examined whether employment status affected the amount and type of dissent employees expressed to management. To address this full-time and part-time employees in separate data collections completed the Upward Dissent Scale. A comparison of participant scores indicated that full-time employees used comparatively more prosocial (direct-factual appeals and solution presentation) and repetition upward dissent tactics compared to part-time employees. Contrastingly, part-time employees relied more heavily on upward dissent expressions that involved circumventing their bosses and threatening to quit their jobs. The findings indicate that employment status has a notable effect on the expression of upward dissent—with full- and part-time employees relying on differing tactics.

*Just Paying Attention: Communication for Organizational Attention*

Luis Felipe Gómez

The main premises in this article are that organizational attention is inherently communicative, and can be nurtured through communication interventions. Two communication practices that reflect organizational attention—information allocation and dialogue—can be nurtured through organizational structures and interventions. Increasing opportunities for dialogue across organizational functions is critical to improve collective attention. Prior research and empirical data are presented to assert that a long-term orientation is also imperative to develop attention through communication practices such as information allocation and dialogue.

*Talk Matters at Work: The Effects of Leader-Member Conversational Quality and Communication Frequency on Work Role Stressors*

Guowei Jian, Francis Dalisay

Although it is clear that leadership plays a significant role in followers' psychological health, the specific mechanisms by which leadership effects may take place await further theorizing and investigation. We argue that communication practices may constitute such specific mechanisms. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine how leader-member conversational quality (LMCQ) and communication frequency are associated with members' perception of work role stressors. Through an online survey, the study found that LMCQ has a significant predictive effect on work role ambiguity and role overload. However, LMCQ interacts with communication frequency in their effects on role conflict. These findings contribute to theories of leadership communication and the continuous development of role dynamics theory.

*An Examination of Leader-Member Dyadic Politeness of Exchange and Servant Leadership on Group Member Performance*

Hassan Abu Bakar, Robert M. McCann

Integrating conversational constraint theory and models of homophily and relational dyadic communication, this study investigates how leader-member politeness exchange and servant leadership influence group member performance in a Malaysian organizational context. Using hierarchical linear modeling with data obtained from a sample of 510 employees, 65 workgroups, and 3 organizations, a politeness of exchange-servant leadership model was tested. Results show that servant leadership was positively and significantly associated with workgroup manager's ratings of group member's performance. The positive association between servant leadership and group member performance is more pronounced when managers and members in workgroups are high in politeness of exchange in their interactions. As predicted, leader-member dyadic politeness of exchange within the workgroup manager-group member dyads moderated this positive association.

*Delivering Feedback: Supervisors' Source Credibility and Communication Competence*

Catherine Y. Kingsley Westerman, Katie M. Reno, Kyle B. Heuett

This study investigated how perceptions of supervisor communication competence and source credibility were affected by the valence and synchronicity of a feedback message and the channel used to deliver the feedback message. Results indicated that those receiving feedback preferred phone calls rather than text messages as a channel for managers to deliver feedback. Also, supervisors delivering positive feedback were

identified as more positive in general than those delivering negative feedback. Further results and implications are discussed.

### **Our Associate Editors**

Ryan S. Bisel, Jonathan Clifton, Bertha Du-Babcock, Paul Madlock, Sky Marsen, Amber N. W. Raile, Jacob D. Rawlins, Robyn Walker, Marlies Whitehouse, Rod Carveth, and Paola Catenaccio.

Contact Editors-in-Chief Jackie Mayfield and Milton Mayfield at [jmayfield@tamiu.edu](mailto:jmayfield@tamiu.edu) or [mmayfield@tamiu.edu](mailto:mmayfield@tamiu.edu) with research news or announcements that you would like included in the next newsletter.

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### **Fostering Excellence in Business Communication**

The Association for Business Communication (ABC) is an international, interdisciplinary organization committed to advancing business communication research, education, and practice.