



## *International Journal of Business Communication*

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### **Greetings from the IJBC Editors**

Welcome everyone! We hope that your spring has been both refreshing and re-energizing. This issue of the *IJBC* newsletter gives the opportunity to submit book reviews (see the *Call for Book Reviewers* below), shares recent author insights, and gives you an overview of the excellent articles in the April 2019 issue. We also welcome all comments/questions about *IJBC*. Feel free to send them to [jmayfield@tamiu.edu](mailto:jmayfield@tamiu.edu).



### **Call for Book Reviewers**

We invite book review manuscripts on all business communication topics. These reviews should be a maximum of two pages or less. Please submit your manuscript on the *IJBC* site to Dr. Kathryn Rybka, Book Review Editor, Regional Vice-President ABC, Midwestern United States, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

## Author Spotlight

For this newsletter we give the spotlight to three of our recent authors (“Virtual Team Leader Communication: Employee Perception and Organizational Reality”) which is available for download from OnLineFirst ). Researchers come to the field through diverse learning and experiential paths. All of these paths motivate a drive for discovery. Reading about our colleagues’ motivations helps us to better understand their research and opens new doors to approach our own scholarship.

### **Sean A. Newman**

As a Senior Vice President of Operations, I have a great deal of interest in applied research. I strive to offer practical insights to organizational leaders which can be used in the workplace to achieve improved outcomes. Over the last 20 years, I have seen firsthand the emergence and acceptance of virtual employees. However, I felt there was a lack of understanding for how leaders’ combined communication methods impact the performance results of virtual teams. This research was an effort to provide a practical blueprint for virtual team leaders on critical communication tools and techniques they should be utilizing and their impact on team performance.

*Sean A. Newman* is a Senior Vice President for Operations at Aon, a global professional services firm, and a part-time Lecturer at University of Central Florida and Valencia College. He received his Executive Doctorate in Business Administration in Management from Rollins College. His research has focused on teamwork, leadership, virtual teams, effective organizational communication, and market strategies. His executive responsibilities include account-ability for teams of employees that deliver outsourced human resource services to companies that include some of the largest and most complex organizations in the United States.

### **Robert C. Ford**

Across my career I have sought to discover and write about new ways of interpreting and applying knowledge that practicing managers can use. As a former editor of a practitioner-oriented journal, I have found great satisfaction in helping others translate research and theoretical findings into practical applications that help managers better manage. My own extensive body of work has focused heavily on writing for these types of publications. The article presented here is a great example of my research orientation as it seeks to answer a practical question with knowledge gained through solid scholarship.

*Robert C. Ford* is a Visiting Professor of Management at Rollins College and professor emeritus at the University of Central Florida. He is the recipient of many academic and professional awards for his service to his profession and is recognized for his many published works on service management.

## **Greg W. Marshall**

Much of my research centers on better understanding elements impacting organization member performance. I'm an advocate for an engaged scholarship approach to research in the social sciences, combining theory and practical implications in a way that maximizes utility to the firm. Today's organizational leaders are looking for help in making evidence-based decisions, and as academics in the management fields we have a unique opportunity to contribute not only to progress within our disciplines but also to best practices within firms. I was pleased to be a part of this research project, particularly because the finding of organizational misalignment among team member perceptions of leader communications, team member perceptions of how the team is performing, and the organization's purported "objective measure" of performance. This result opens the door for interesting questions about the impact and effectiveness of such metrics in a team environment.

*Greg W. Marshall* is the Charles Harwood Professor of Marketing and Strategy at Rollins College. He has been the recipient of numerous academic awards, including the 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Marketing Association Selling and Sales Management Special Interest Group.

## **The April 2019 Issue of *IJBC***

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

### *Are Strategic Communication Management Competencies and Personal Attributes Global? A Case Study of Practice in Finland and New Zealand*

Margaret Brunton, Anne Kankaanranta, Leena Louhiala-Salminen, Lynn Jeffrey

The drive to both maintain competitiveness and to meet marketplace expectations using the strategic management of communication is a feature of the international workplace. In the complex and dynamic commercial environment of the new millennium, this drive includes the imperatives to employ competent communication professionals. Whether organizations are intent on acquiring or developing proficient practitioners, the ability to achieve these aims rests on the identification of relevant competencies and attributes. This study uses the Critical Incident Technique to explore the practice of Communication Management in a sample of practitioners in New Zealand and Finland—two geographically disperse countries. The identified critical incidents mostly related to managing crisis communication across both countries. To manage the incidents, communication practitioners predominantly used two competencies: stakeholder relationship management and external interface management. In addition, the personal attribute of adaptability was most commonly employed in both countries. Despite the similarity of incidents and the competencies and attributes required to manage them, also variability in practitioners' strategic and personal responses was evident.

*Textual Voices in Corporate Reporting: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Chinese, Italian, and American CSR Reports*

Marina Bondi, Danni Yu

This article investigates direct quotations in a corpus of corporate social responsibility (CSR) reports in Italian, Chinese, and English. The corpus is composed of 60 CSR reports published by Italian, Chinese, and American companies in the banking and energy sector. The study aims at exploring what types of textual voices are involved in the discourse of CSR reporting and how different sources of voices are represented, using the framework of social actor representation proposed by Van Leeuwen. The results show that the voices presented in direct quotations are often “orchestrated” by companies into “symphony” rather than “polyphony.” Most of the sources of direct quotations are represented as individuals with specified names. The comparative analysis shows that companies from different cultural backgrounds present different preferences in selecting and representing the various sources. The Italian and American CSR reports present more voices from managers, while the Chinese CSR reports show a clearer preference for voices from employees and clients.

*National Cultures on European Corporate Homepages in English: A Linguistic Analysis*

Costanza Cucchi

The aim of the study is to discover linguistic features that may be related to national differences on European corporate websites where English is used as a lingua franca. The methodology used is qualitative and corporate homepages are taken as units of analysis. European cheese companies are chosen due to the links between food and national identity and to the importance of the cheese sector in Europe. Four European countries—Austria, Denmark, Poland, and Portugal—are selected in order to represent different national cultures within three different geographic areas, namely Northern, Central, and Southern Europe. Findings reveal, first, significant differences in the kind of information provided and in the linguistic features used and, second, that a number of differences can be explained with reference to Hall’s and Hofstede’s cultural models. The study shows that linguistic research can contribute considerably to marketing studies, by identifying linguistic markers that could be associated with cultural dimensions and by illustrating how they interact in actual website texts.

*Understanding Decision Making During a Crisis: An Axiomatic Model of Cognitive Decision Choices*

Tulika Varma

This study investigated factors that influence the strategy process during a crisis within the chemical industry. It examined key organizational, environmental, and management factors—comprehensiveness, formalization, politicization, impact of the crisis, financial reporting—for their role in the strategy process during a crisis using regression analysis. The findings indicate that the strategy process during a crisis is influenced by several factors; specifically,

politicization, formalization of the decision-making process, financial reporting, and the impact of the crisis. This study proposes an axiomatic model of cognitive decision making during a crisis. It suggests that decision making during a crisis is a complex problem-solving process contingent on several variables, which can be arranged on a scale with the proscriptive variables (variables that impede or hinder accommodation) at one end of the scale and supportive variables (variables that help advocate an organization's position) at the other end of the scale, which when cross-joined with the advocacy/accommodation continuum yield a Cartesian product of communication options. Other implications and future areas for research are suggested.

*How Consultants and Their Clients Collaborate in Spite of Massive Communication Barriers*  
Michäas Sutter, Alfred Kieser

Managers often collaborate with members of consultancies with the aim of improving the performance of their organizations. It is astonishing that, after the completion of such consulting projects, both parties in most cases express satisfaction with the results. It is astonishing because, as we show in this article, consultants and the managers of client organizations, when engaging in joint projects, have to overcome severe communication barriers. These communication barriers originate from different frames of reference the collaborators refer to, different goals they pursue, and different logics they follow. As we demonstrate on the basis of an empirical analysis, the communication barriers are overcome predominantly through the use of boundary objects and prototyping.

*The Relationship Between Aggressive Communication Traits and Organizational Assimilation*  
Michael Sollitto, Gregory A. Cranmer

This study used theory of independent mindedness as a framework to examine the role of aggressive communication traits in organizational assimilation. Both employee traits and their perception of supervisor traits were examined. Results indicated that employees who are indirect verbally aggressive report lower levels of familiarity with coworkers, acculturation, involvement, job competence, and role negotiation. Additionally, employees who perceive their supervisors as higher in argumentativeness, low in verbal aggressiveness, and low in indirect interpersonal aggressiveness report higher levels of familiarity with coworkers, familiarity with supervisors, acculturation, recognition, involvement, and role negotiation.

**Our Associate Editors**

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

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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