INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

COMMUNICATOR STYLE: A STUDY OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGERS

by

JENNIFER M. PAYNE

A DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Area of Professional Studies
in the Graduate School of
The University of Alabama

TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA

1996

UMI Number: 9633978

Copyright 1996 by
Payne, Jennifer Marie
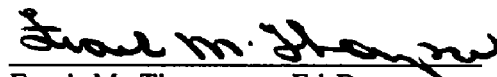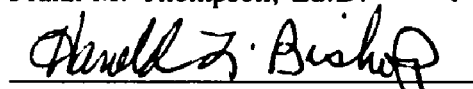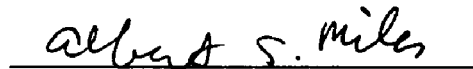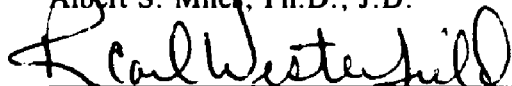
Submitted by Jennifer Marie Payne in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of <u>Doctor of Philosophy</u> specializing in <u>Administration and Instructional Leadership</u>.

Accepted on behalf of the Faculty of the Graduate School by the <u>dissertation</u>

committee:

Frank M. Thompson, Ed.D.

Harold L. Bishop, Ph.D.

Albert S. Miles, Ph.D., J.D.

R. Carl Westerfield, Ph.D.

Michael T. Miller, Ed.D.
Chairperson

R. Carl Westerfield, Ph.D.
Area Head

Ronald Rogers, Ph.D.
Dean of the Graduate School

___3/5/96___
Date

___3/15/96___
Date

Acknowledgments

List of Tables

Table

Chapter I

Introduction

The 20th century has experienced more radical social transformations than any other era of recorded history (Drucker, 1994). One of the transformations unique to this century is the nature of work in developed countries, like the United States. An enormous shift in the types of jobs required 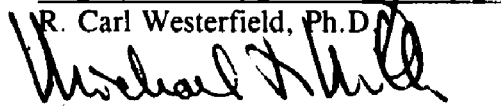for the success of an organization has occurred since the industrial revolution in the 1800s. This is the first society in which people do not do the same work as previous generations, as was the case in the past when the vast majority of people worked as farmers or machine operators (Drucker, 1994). Drucker (1993, 1994) has reported about the need to abandon traditional business theories and practices which no longer meet the expectations and visions of organizational success in the 1900s. Many researchers are in agreement that in the United States the traditional style of conducting business is no longer an acceptable practice (Champy, 1995; Cross, Feather, & Lynch, 1994; Wick & Leon, 1995; Yeung, Brockbank, & Ulrich, 1994).

Although numerous complex political and economic issues contribute to the social transformation reported by Drucker (1994), one of its outcomes has been the emergence of the knowledge worker. According to Drucker (1994), the knowledge worker is one who gains access to jobs and social position through formal education. The type of education that is required for knowledge work exceeds that which can be

1

acquired through a formal college education and cannot be acquired through an apprenticeship. Drucker (1993) reported, "In the place of the blue-collar world is a society in which access to good jobs no longer depends on the union card, but on the school certificate" (p. 333). Institutional education is not sufficient for current organizational needs. An educated person is defined by Drucker (1994) as an individual "who has learned how to learn, and who continues learning, especially by formal education, throughout his or her lifetime" (p. 67).

Although Drucker (1993) reported the need for American managers to grasp the tenets of the new world economy, he did not define the specific role of human resource professionals in this age of social transformation. However, Drucker's proposal of the knowledge worker coincides with the research of others (Senge, 1990; Watkins & Marsick, 1993; Wick & Leon, 1995) who have suggested that an individual's ability and willingness to learn continuously in an organizational setting has a direct impact on the success of the organization.

Another perspective of the movement from traditional management theory and practices has been presented by Alvin Toffler (1995) in Creating A New Civilization. Toffler used the term "Third Wave" to characterize the movement from the industrial era, known as the Second Wave, to the age of global competition and the information revolution (Markowich, 1995). According to Toffler and others (Champy, 1995; Cross, Feather, & Lynch, 1994; Thurow, 1992), the key to survival in this new era is to first recognize that the dynamics of the workplace have changed and that new

strategies and approaches are necessary for organizations to succeed in a highly

competitive global environment.

Researchers (Martell & Carroll, 1995) have recognized that human capital is

one of the most important components of strategic success for many companies.

Thurow (1992) reported,

> The route to business success in the third wave era will be through the
> bottom 50 percent of the workforce--those who do the work and
> interact with the customers. If they are neither motivated nor trained to
> do what is necessary, the company will be in trouble. In the end, the output
> of the bottom 50 percent will affect the wages of the top 50 percent. (p.93)

The Third Wave perspective of breaking from traditional management styles

encompasses a complex network of change and organizational growth. This

perspective can be studied from the vantage of human resource development.

The human resource professional has a specific function and role in the

transformation of the workplace. Markowich (1995) reported that human resource

professionals are in a position to take a leadership role in the Third Wave era by

reconstructing outdated policies and procedures to fit new employment relationships.

These new employment relationships have developed as a result of the recognition by

top executives that employees are the most important variable in corporate success

(Markowich, 1995). In addition to adjusting hiring practices, Markowich suggested

modifying employee benefits to be less paternalistic by using performance appraisals

as a team approach to planning and by conducting new employee orientations in a

manner that teaches new organizational members how to succeed. With the standard

of shared responsibility and accountability as a norm in the Third Wave era, human resource professionals have the clearly defined role of the change agent.

Reengineering is another perspective of the movement from traditional management theory and practice (Hammer & Champy, 1993). Hammer and Champy (1993) defined reengineering as "the fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical, contemporary measures of performance such as cost, quality service, and speed" (p. 4). Champy (1995) noted that when an organization is undergoing the reengineering process, traditional management-only responsibilities and authority are widely distributed so that every individual is a manager--at least of his or her own work.

Communication and education are two key aspects of reengineering an organization. Interviews of human resource professionals involved in reengineering efforts showed that the biggest challenge to management is to "communicate to lessen the threat, to reduce anxiety" (Champy, 1995, p. 145). Specific communication styles that have been determined as essential for new employees include the ability to communicate in selling, teamwork, and service situations, and the interpersonal skills to work with a variety of people. The educational aspect of reengineering has been explained by Champy as the resources of an individual to grasp the concept of ongoing change and the willingness and capacity to learn new processes.

For organizations that have embarked on reengineering strategies, it has been determined that human resource departments and professionals must be an integral part of the effort (Overman, 1994). If a business has decided to re-invent itself, then

its people-needs and services must also change. Overman (1994) suggested that human resource professionals begin the effort by rethinking the role and function of the human resource department to determine whether there is a better way of conducting business. Chances are that the traditional organizational and operational principles and procedures that have worked for years will be abandoned (Champy, 1995). During such periods of transition, Brooks (1995) reported that the human resource professionals' role is to refocus the organizational members.

Communication has been identified as an important factor for the success of organizations in the 1990s and beyond (Brooks, 1995; Champy, 1995; Dell, 1992). This communication factor is critical for the human resource professional engaged in the reengineering process because his or her job has moved to the frontline (Champy, 1995). In Reengineering Management, Champy (1995) reported of the qualities that a human resource professional must possess in an environment characterized by change:

> They must have very strong networking skills. They must be able to go out and ask people the right questions. They must align their goals with those of the corporation. They must have a big-picture perspective to see how the pieces fit together. They must be good coaches with a real sensitivity to people. They must be open to criticism. They must be thoughtful and deliberate. They must know how to hire people who will work well together. (p. 180)

Although Champy did not directly report about the importance of communication competence in the quote, the qualities and skills mentioned are variations of verbal and nonverbal communication attributes.

In addition to communication as a cornerstone of reengineering, Champy (1995) also reported about the importance of education, which is based on an

appreciation of human potential. According to Champy and others (Senge, 1990; Wick & Leon, 1995), people who are freed from the limitations of narrowly defined job tasks and duties are able, with education, to obtain full ownership of their work and broadened job responsibilities.

Regardless of the terminology, such as the Third Wave era, reengineering, and social transformation, many researchers are in agreement that in the United States the traditional style of conducting business is no longer an acceptable practice (Champy, 1995). Forces such as global competition and rapidly expanding technologies have resulted in the need for researchers of business and organizational behavior to examine the world of work from a new perspective.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose for conducting this study was to determine the communication styles of human resource managers in relation to communicator image, gender, education level, and length of service. The human resource personnel studied were limited to members of a professional human resource management organization employed by business and non-profit organizations in the State of Alabama.

Although research of communication styles has been substantial in the fields of business and organizational communication little research has been conducted to determine the communication styles of human resource managers. Additionally, human resource professionals' effectiveness in their positions depends upon their ability to communicate throughout the organization.

Research Questions

Four research questions will be addressed in the current study:

1. To what extent do human resource managers have a positive communicator image?

2. Is there a relationship between communicator image and active and passive communication styles?

3. Do the communication styles of the human resource managers significantly differ by the demographic variables of gender, education level, and length of service?

4. Do the variables of gender, education level, and length of service predict the communicator style of human resource managers?

Definition of Terms

Human Resource Manager: A human resource manager or human resource professional is an exempt (salaried) employee of a business or non-profit organization whose responsibilities include the basic human resource functions of recruiting, training, compensation, and communications, as well participation as a member of the top management team.

Length of Service: Length of service is the number of months or years in which an individual has been employed as a human resource manager for an organization.

Education Level: Education level is high school, undergraduate, and graduate degrees earned by a human resource manager.

Communicator Style: Communicator style is defined in terms of 10 independent variables and one dependent variable. The independent variables are dominant, dramatic, contentious, animated, impression leaving, relaxed, attentive, open, friendly, and precise. The dependent variable is communicator image. Norton (1978) defined communicator style as "the way one verbally and paraverbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered, or understood" (p. 99).

Subconstruct: The subconstruct is each independent and dependent variable which determines the communicator style.

Dominant: The dominant communication style is characterized by taking charge of social interactions (Norton, 1978).

Dramatic: The dramatic communication style is characterized by exaggerating, telling stories, rhythm, voice, and other stylistic devices to highlight or understate content (Norton, 1978).

Contentious: The contentious communication style is characterized by being argumentative (Norton, 1978).

Animated: The animated communication style is characterized by physical and other nonverbal cues (Norton, 1978).

Impression Leaving: The impression leaving communication style is characterized by determining if an individual has made a memorable impression upon others (Norton, 1978).

Relaxed: The relaxed communication style is characterized as relaxing, open, and without anxiety (Norton, 1978).

Attentive: The attentive communication style is characterized by empathizing and listening (Norton, 1978).

Open: The open communication style is characterized by being conversational, expansive, affable, frank, and approachable (Norton, 1978).

Friendly: The friendly communication style is characterized by being unhostile and willing to be intimate (Norton, 1978).

Precise: The precise communication style is characterized by being specific and unambiguous.

Communicator Image: The communicator image is the person's perception of personal communicative ability, which is either good or bad; it is usually predicted by the dominant and impression leaving styles (Norton, 1978).

Active Cluster: The active cluster includes the dominant, dramatic, animated, contentious, impression leaving, and open communication styles. The active cluster is characterized by sending messages and being talkative (Norton, 1978).

Passive Cluster: The passive cluster includes the attentive, friendly, relaxed, precise, and open communication styles. The passive cluster is characterized by being passive, receiver oriented, and other oriented (Norton, 1978).

Limitations and Delimitations

1. The study was limited to the perceptions of human resource professionals who are members of the Alabama chapter of the Society of Human Resource Managers (SHRM), which is the largest professional human resource management organization in the United States. Subsequently, the study and its results are not generalizable to human resource professionals who are not members of SHRM.

2. The study was limited to those SHRM members who agreed to complete the questionnaire. A delimitation of the study is that the participants included only those members who attended the Birmingham and Tuscaloosa chapter meetings designated for collecting data.

3. The study was limited to the extent to which the Norton Communicator Style Measure can measure self-perceptions of communicator style. A delimitation of the study was the process of collecting data with the use of one instrument.

4. The study was limited in that human resource manager's communicator style was measured only in terms of a self-reporting instrument. A delimitation of the study was that the human resource professional's communication style was not examined from the perspective of a subordinate, peer, or superior.

Assumptions

This study accepted the following assumptions:

1. The cover letter and instrument instructions adequately explained the purpose and procedure for completing the instrument.

2. Every item on the Norton instrument was precise and accurately measured the participants' communicator style and image.

3. Each of the participants honestly and accurately responded to the questions.

4. The research findings regarding the communication styles of human resource mangers were of value in the fields of business, organizational behavior, and communication studies.

Significance of the Study

This study was significant because it provided a foundation for further research regarding the communication styles of human resource professionals. The first step to determining the ideal or optimal communication skills and competencies of human resource employees was to determine a base of communication styles. Because human resource professionals have a specific role in the success of organizations in this new wave of experimental management approaches, it is imperative that these professionals possess the skills to communicate about complex issues with employees of all levels. A review of the relevant literature revealed that no research has yet been conducted regarding the self-perceived communication styles of human resource managers.

Identifying the communicator image of human resource professionals was important because of its relationship to self-image and confidence. Norton (1978) reported that a person who has a "'good' communicator image finds it easy to interact with others whether they are intimates, friends, acquaintances, or strangers" (p. 101).

Conversely, an individual with a bad communicator image finds it difficult to communicate with a variety of people, and may seek employment involving limited interaction with coworkers, subordinates, and peers (Daly & McCroskey, 1975). Clearly, having the confidence to interact with a variety of people in the workplace is an essential communication characteristic for success within the context of an organization (Jablin, 1979; Kramer, 1995; Weick, 1979). Furthermore, research has shown that communicator image is especially important for human resource professionals who are functioning as change agents in organizations (Champy, 1995).

Identifying differences between communicator style and gender was important because research has shown that many questions regarding gender and communication issues in the workplace remain unanswered. Montgomery and Norton (1981) studied male and female communication styles and reported that overall, men and women showed more similarities than differences in communication styles. Other researchers (Brownwell, 1993; Fairhurst, 1993; Staley & Shockely-Zalabak, 1986) have reported that differences do exist in the communication styles of men and women, including speaking styles. Further research regarding gender and communicator styles was necessary due to the disparity among current researchers.

Current researchers (Champy, 1995; Drucker, 1994; Wick & Leon, 1995) have recognized that two employee variables are essential for success in the 1990s and beyond: level of formal education and willingness to learn. Wick and Leon (1995) reported that "No matter what label is attached to it, learning undergirds all the current theories on how to achieve business success" (p. 299). Senge (1990) and

Watkins and Marsick (1993) have also reported about the need for continuous individual, team, and organizational learning for businesses striving to survive the challenges of downsizing, outsourcing, and redesigning. Human resource professionals, who often function as catalysts for learning organizations, perform an important function in the development of others. Therefore, it was important to determine whether there is a difference between the communication style and level of education of human resource managers.

An important aspect of this study was to determine whether there was a difference in how human resource managers communicate and the amount of time in which the managers have worked for their organization. To date, little to no research regarding communicator style and career maturity for human resource professionals, or managers in general, has been published. However, some research has suggested that an individual's communicator style does change during the course of a career. For example, Brekelmans, Holvast, and Tartwijk (1992) reported that teachers' communication styles change during the course of their teaching career. Specifically, Brekelmans, Holvast, and Tartwijk (1992) concluded that the dominating communication style was intensified during the first 10 years of teaching, indicating that teachers with a decade of experience are better able to promote both student cognitive and affective outcomes. This study sought to determine whether there is a difference in the communication style of human resource managers according to their length of service.

Many researchers have studied the relationship of manager communication style to such variables as employee satisfaction and performance, and sales success (Dion & Notarantoni, 1992; Pace, 1962). Researchers have also examined the relationship of teacher communication style to such variables as classroom organization, cognitive development of students, and staff development (Brekelmans, Holvast, & Tartwijk, 1992). However, no researchers have studied the relationship of human resource manager communication style to such variables as communicator image, gender, education level, and length of service.

Chapter II

Review of the Related Literature

Researchers in the field of business (Champy, 1995; Drucker, 1994) and

organizational communication studies (Shockley-Zalabak, 1994; Stohl, 1995) have

noted that the status-quo management styles of businesses and organizations have

changed dramatically. Champy (1995) wrote that organizational leaders have realized

that "Nothing is simple anymore . . . now, whatever we do is not enough . . . and

everything is in question" (p. 9). This confusion has been recognized by Champy

(1995) as being at least partially due to the recent movement toward "reengineering"

and "redesigning" entire organizations and their positions. Organizational

communication, defined by Kreps (1990) as the process of organizational members

gathering pertinent information about their organization and the changes occurring

within it, has been determined by researchers (Deetz, 1995; Shockley-Zalabak, 1994)

to be inextricably linked to transforming organizations. Deetz (1995) wrote that

people need to reframe their conception of business and communication by viewing

business and communication as transforming processes. This review of related

literature provides a foundation for the linkage of communication and management.

The first area of research reviewed focuses on the evolution of human resource

development and the role of human resource professionals in organizations. The

second area focuses on three tracts of communication studies in organizational

15

settings. The third area focuses on studies of communication style and competence in organizational settings.

Human Resource Development

The field of human resource development (HRD) has evolved in the past few decades from providing job-related training and development for individual and organizational growth (Nadler & Nadler, 1990) to providing support and growth opportunities in all aspects of individual and organizational life. This evolution has been based partially on the recognition that human capital is one of the most critical components of success for many companies (Martell & Carroll, 1995). This section of the review of related literature focuses on the function of human resource development and the role of the human resource manager in an organization. First, a historical perspective of the evolution of human resource development is presented followed by an overview of the human resource manager's role in general organizational functions, contribution as a member of the top management team, influence in creating a learning organization, and importance as a change agent.

Historical Perspective

Human resource development can be viewed as an evolution of how individuals who work within an organizational setting are viewed by those who manage them. Sergiovanni and Starratt (1988) wrote that the first theories of management emerged from the thinking and work of Frederick Taylor during the

early 1900s. Taylor's Theory of Scientific Management represented a classical

autocratic philosophy of management in which employees were hired to carry out

prespecified duties as directed by management. In 1911, Taylor published The

Principles of Scientific Management, which was considered by many to be the seminal

work of organizational and decision theory. Called the "Father of Scientific

Management" (Del Mar & Collins, 1976), Taylor (1967) wrote that "the principal

objective of management should be to secure the maximum prosperity for the

employer, coupled with the maximum prosperity for each employee" (p. 9). Taylor

(1967) defined maximum prosperity for the employee as "the development of each

man to his state of maximum efficiency," (p. 9).

After the traditional approach was established, leadership studies in the early-

1900s explored managerial approaches to employee participation within organizations

and found that two distinct theories--human relations and human resources--pervaded

their view of subordinates (Miles, 1965). Human relations theorists focused directly

on the role of the individual and promoted a model of human behavior based on self-

actualization.

According to Sergiovanni and Starratt (1988), human relations theory posited

that increased involvement by the worker would lead to increased productivity. They

also reported that its origins were in the democratic administration movement, which

began in the 1930s with Elton Mayo, a social philosopher and professor of Harvard

University. The key element in the human relations approach to managing

employees, according to Miles (1965), was the objective of making organizational

members feel useful and important to the overall effort. Thus, although employees were asked to offer suggestions and opinions, their input was not taken seriously by management.

Although the human relations approach acknowledged the importance of the individual within the organization, it shared with the traditional approach the ultimate goal of worker compliance with managerial authority (Miles, 1965).

In contrast, Miles (1965) stated that the human resources model of employee involvement offered an authentic approach that viewed individuals as "reservoirs of untapped resources" (p. 151). Developed in response to cosmetic applications of human relations theory, the model advanced a more enlightened strategy for meeting needs of members and increasing their participation in organizational activities. Managers who embraced this philosophy deemed it their duty to unlock the creative potential of their employees so that each individual contributed maximum effort in decision-making activities. Instead of making employees feel useful, the human resources model suggested that when individuals are involved in making decisions that impact the organization, the organization is more productive and the employees' satisfaction is a result of making significant contributions to organizational success (Miles, 1965).

A more recent approach, according to Senge (1990), is referred to as systems learning and learning organizations, and stems from the belief that "organizations that will truly excel in the future will be the organizations that discover how to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels in an organization" (p.5).

Watkins and Marsick (1993) defined the learning organization as an organization that "learns continuously and transforms itself" (p. 8).

The learning organization approach to human resource development is more complex and broad than previous models which focused primarily on employee participation. Senge (1990) reported that the core of this theory is the notion of systems thinking, which is the conceptual framework for viewing actions in an organization as a whole rather than as isolated events. Systems thinking is a tool for seeing the interrelationships of people and actions rather than linear cause and effect chains. The purpose of this perspective is to enable individuals to shift their minds from seeing parts to seeing wholes, from seeing organizational members as helpless reactors to seeing them as active participants in shaping their reality, and from reacting to the present to creating the future.

Individual vision and personal mastery of intrinsic goals lead to shared vision, a vital aspect of the learning organization because it provides the focus and energy for learning (Senge, 1990). Team learning is the process of aligning and developing the capacity of a team to create the results its members truly desire, building upon the discipline of shared vision and personal mastery.

According to Wick and Leon (1995) "discussions of learning organizations too often end up intangible and obscure" (p. 299). Through their studies of organizations that are adept at learning, Wick and Leon (1995) have developed their own definition of a learning organization: "one that continually improves by rapidly creating and refining the capabilities needed for future success" (p. 299). Wick and Leon

concluded that five elements make up a learning organization (a leader with a vision, a plan, information, inventiveness, and implementation) and that senior human resource professionals are in a prime position to become learning expediters within their organizations.

Roles of the Human Resource Manager

As theories of human resource management have become more complex, so has the role of the human resource manager in an organization. Many factors, including changing government and legal requirements and a need for more highly skilled and motivated employees, have contributed to making human resource management more complex and more important to organizations (Byars & Rue, 1991). Other factors include a domestic and global business environment characterized by competition, rapid technological change, and constrained resources (Wolfe, 1995). For the thousands of human resource professionals around the world, Marquardt and Engel (1993) maintained, new competencies are needed to meet the challenges and responsibilities of the global business environment.

A description of the general functions of the role of a human resource manager includes recruiting and selection, appraisal, training and development, and compensation, including rewards and benefits (Byars & Rue, 1991; Wolfe, 1995). These functions encompass a multitude of tasks, such as implementing fair and legal hiring, firing, and promotional practices based the Equal Employment Opportunity Laws and Affirmative Action; new-member orientation; dissemination of

organizational policies and federal and state safety regulations; employee health management programs including medical, dental and health insurance; and the management of retirement programs such as 401-K and profit-sharing plans (Byars & Rue, 1991; Nadler & Nadler, 1990; Wolfe, 1995).

The role of the human resource manger as a member of the top management team is a relatively new function. For many years human resource managers have aspired to be a business partner to general management (Kesler, 1995). As a result, current literature discusses "reengineering" or "redesigning" the human resources function for a more strategic role in organizations. This means that human resource mangers must be in direct contact with corporate presidents and CEOs because success in business is an inextricable linked to effective human resource strategies (Flipowski & Halcrow, 1992). The annual Personnel Journal 100 reflected the growing importance of the human resource function and how closely human resource personnel are linked to top management. For example, in the 1992 edition, 58% of the human resource managers on the top 100 list reported to the president or to the CEO of the organization (Flipowski & Halcrow, 1992). Respondents listed such functions as facilities, government affairs, information systems, new ventures, communication, and quality loss as added responsibilities beyond their general human resource functions.

Linking the human resource function to upper management and strategic planning is partially due to the evolution of human resources. In a recent poll of top executives, 90% of them reported that employees are their most important variable in

corporate success (Markowich, 1995). This is a distinct change from previous human

relations/human resource perspectives that tended to limit the importance of the

people in the organization. According to Martell and Carroll (1995), this suggested a

shift from the more traditional view of personnel that focuses on micro issues, such as

individual worker's performance and satisfaction, to an active approach to human

resource management which links both strategy and organizational performance. The

term strategic human resource management (SHRM) developed from this shift and is

a new approach to the function of human resource management and managers.

According to Martell and Carroll (1995), characteristics of SHRM include a long-term

focus and the expectation that effective policies and practices should result in

increased organizational performance.

An additional reason explaining why human resource managers are now linked

to top management is due to the position's direct impact on an organization's financial

bottom-line. In the 1980s, human resource professionals-to-employees ratios

increased to 1:50 or 1:40 (Yeung, Brockbank, & Ulrich, 1994). Yeung et al. (1994)

reported that this trend in the 1990s was reversing due to the financial losses of many

Fortune 500 companies. As part of an overall trend in cost-cutting efforts, many

human resource departments have downsized in proportion to their overall workforce.

In addition to downsizing human resource departments, current literature

(Yeung et al., 1994) has suggested three primary tactics for reducing human resources

costs: consolidating such activities as benefits policy, payroll administration, and

training; updating computer systems for more sophisticated and timely transactions of

benefits and general record keeping needs; and outsourcing some of the standardized

human resource activities such as computer programming and technical writing.

Yeung et al. (1994) further reported that the human resource manager of today

must master of a variety of business matters including a general knowledge of

finance, external customer needs, information technology and other business processes

which are necessary to join the top management team. Another important role for the

human resource manager is that of change agent. Fullan (1993) defined a change

agent as one who is "self-conscious about the nature of change and the change

process" (p. 12). According to the author, a change agent must have a generative

foundation for building greater change capacity. This foundation includes personal

vision-building, inquiry, mastery, and collaboration.

In an organizational setting, human resource professionals need to develop

skills in interpersonal communication and influence management, problem-solving,

and creativity (Yeung et al., 1994) to be effective change agents. One of the essential

competencies identified by Yeung et al. (1994) is the ability to communicate

effectively and to appropriately frame issues. The human resource manger who is

able to help manage change through well-planned strategies can add substantial value

to a business. In fact, human resource personnel are the most qualified change agents

for most organizations.

Watkins and Marsick (1993) said that human resource professionals in a

learning organization are strategically positioned so that learning is used as an

important competitive strategy. Their view of a learning organization is that it has

the potential to expand the human resource professional's role to include the changing threshold of skills in the organization and to engage in the transformation of the entire organization. In this sense, the learning organization represents an evolutionary advance in thinking about workplace training and education in the United States.

Wick and Leon (1995) contended that human resource professionals are in a prime position to become learning expediters within their organizations by being able to identify the organization's strengths and learning weaknesses. The human resource person, as a change agent, is the catalyst for actually using what the organization members have learned. This key individual, reported Wolfe (1995), is faced with the important challenge of being the innovator as organizations make the adaptations necessary to remain competitive.

Summary

Researchers in the field of human resource management have reported that the role of human resource professionals has evolved from a position of training and recruiting to a position requiring extensive knowledge of strategic planning, finance, organizational change and communication (Flipowski & Halcrow, 1992; Kesler, 1995). This transition from limited organizational participation to system-wide participation, as business partner to upper management, has resulted in the need for human resource professionals to expand their knowledge and skills.

Communication Studies

The field of communication studies spans a variety of disciplines, including leadership, management, sociology, and psychology. Organizational communication, which is a process whereby members gather pertinent information about their organization and the changes that occur within it (Kreps, 1990), is one of several specific areas of communication studies that has attracted the attention of researchers in the past two decades. To some researchers (Euske & Roberts, 1987) communication is so important that it is referred to as the social glue that ties members and organizations together. The focus of this section of the literature review is to first explore the history of organizational communication studies, beginning with the classical theorists that emerged in the early-1900s, followed by a review of the current literature of three specific areas of communication studies within an organizational context: superior-subordinate communication, communication apprehension, and conflict-management and communication.

Historical Perspective

Modern theories of organizations were developed during the Industrial Revolution and were perceived as theories of management because they reflected the interest of managers and were implemented by managers to improve productivity (Kreps, 1990). The first theories emerging from the industrial revolution, referred to as the classical approach, were models that resembled efficient machines. Frederick Winslow Taylor's theory of scientific management (1967), first published in 1911,

was characterized by clearly defined rules, laws, and a separation of management and

workers. Max Weber's theory of bureaucracy (1968) was characterized by

formalized rules, division of labor, and universalism. The philosophies of Taylor and

Weber are examples of the classical approach to understanding organizations.

Communication in these models was viewed only as a tool for issuing orders and

gaining worker compliance (Kreps, 1990). For example, an excerpt about functional

management from Taylor's book Shop Management (1919) revealed his notion of

organizational communication:

> Certainly the most marked outward characteristic of functional management
> lies in the fact that each workman, instead of coming in direct contact with the
> management at one point only namely, through his gang boss, received his
> daily orders and help directly from eight different bosses, each of whom
> performs his own particular function. Four of these bosses are in the planning
> room and of these three send their orders to and receive their returns from the
> men, usually in writing. (p. 99)

The predominant theme of the classical approach was that its theorists discounted all

human factors in their quest to organize work.

Focusing on the role of the individual in the organization was the theme of

human relations theorists who recognized the limitations of classical theory. Human

relations theory posited that increased involvement by the worker would lead to

increased productivity (Miles, 1965). The human relations theory, which was

influenced by Herbert Blumer's work in Symbolic Interactionism, is a perspective in

social psychology for understanding the nature of social interaction. Charon (1992)

wrote that it is "the dynamic activities that take place among persons" (p. 23). Two

major extensions of research on human relations were Herzberg's Theory of

Motivation and Fiedler's Contingency Theory. These leadership theories were founded in the human relations notion that supportive leader communication positively affects productivity and morale (Kreps, 1990).

The human resources approach to understanding organizational life stemmed from researchers who were disenchanted with the cosmetic applications of human relations theory. The approach offered a more enlightened strategy for meeting the needs of organizational members and increased their participation in organizational activities (Miles, 1965). A key point of departure from previous theories is that human resources valued the role of upward communications and was concerned with the total organizational climate. Leadership theories, such as McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, grew out of the human resources theory (Kreps, 1990).

The systems approach to organizational studies broadened the perspective of viewing organizations by borrowing concepts from other areas of research. According to Katz and Kahn (1966), the theoretical concepts of the systems approach begins with the input, output, and functioning of the organization as a system and not with the rational purposes of its leaders. Theorists of this approach believe that the functional whole is more than just a collection of its independent parts and that to understand all aspects of an issue one must focus on a broad range of issues. For example, to understand the intended and unintended consequences of increased or decreased efficiency, it is necessary to study how pressures to reduce time and eliminate unnecessary motion impact morale, absenteeism, commitment, and

employee turnover. The definition of a system, according to Senge (1990), is a complex set of relationships among interdependent parts or components which illustrate its broad approach in understanding organizational life.

Weick (1969) contributed a three-phase model of enactment, selection, and retention to highlight the importance of communication in the systems approach of organizational communication. His theory traced the specific communicative activities in which individuals engage to accomplish organization. This action perspective is defined by Kreps (1990) as a process-oriented model that stresses human interaction as the key phenomenon of an organization. Weick (1979) wrote that the main drawback in his model, as a format for research, was that it was abstract.

Cultural studies of organizations developed as a reaction against the mechanics of complex systems with the goal of revealing culture within the everyday practices of persons in organizations. Kreps (1990) reported that researchers focused on language(s) of the workplace, routines, dramatic performances of managers and employees, and the shared practices that help make organizations unique. Kreps (1990) wrote that the study of organizational culture is achieved through interpretations of how an organization, which is itself a symbol, uses other symbols, and defined culture as performance: it is a way of making sense of an organization by looking at its practices, activities, stories, rites, and rituals.

Overall, cultural studies have been less prevalent than other forms of organizational communication research. Researchers of longitudinal cultural studies often found that the complexity of their work leads them into directions other than

where they were intended. In addition, deciphering corporate culture has inherent risks that must be assessed before analyzing communication and organizing from this perspective (Shein, 1992). The business world, however, has developed the following two approaches to cultural studies: Deal and Kennedy's Corporate Cultures (1982), which dealt with concepts associated with the attainment and maintenance of strong cultures, and Peters and Waterman's In Search of Excellence (1982), which presented eight specific themes found in top-performing companies.

Superior-Subordinate Communication Studies

Since the early 1900s, according to Jablin (1979), social scientists have investigated how superiors and subordinates interact and communicate to achieve both personal and organizational goals. The result of this research is a broad field of study that sheds light on the communicative accomplishments of people, ranging from an understanding of the nature of employee satisfaction and leader effectiveness to issues of gender, power, and conflict. Also, trends in the focus of research over recent years support the importance of communication competency for the success of supervisor-subordinate relationships with an organization (Shockley-Zalabak, 1991). The dyad tradition of superior-subordinate research refers to those studies that focus on dependent pairings of one leader and one subordinate or organizational member (Dansereau & Markham, 1987). This is in contrast to interaction among leaders and groups or entire work units. Although many researchers (Deluga & Perry, 1991; Kramer, 1995; Scandura & Schriesheim, 1994; Sias & Jablin, 1995; Waldron, 1991;

Wayne & Green, 1993; York & Denton, 1990) have studied issues of superior-subordinate communications, this paper focuses specifically on research using the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory of superior-subordinate communication.

The social exchange theory has provided the foundation for research in the role-making processes between one leader and an individual subordinate (Yukl, 1994). According to Yukl (1994), the most fundamental form of social interaction is an exchange of benefits or favors. This exchange can include material benefits such as a car or salary increase, or psychological benefits such as demonstrations of affection, approval, respect, and esteem. Social exchange theories tend to describe how the relationship between a superior and subordinate develop and how power (the ability to influence) is gained or lost (Yukl, 1994). A variation of the social exchange theory is the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory. The LMX theory was formerly named the Vertical Dyad Linkage Theory because of its emphasis on reciprocal influence processes between one superior and one subordinate (Yukl, 1994). Fairhurst and Chandler (1989) argued that in the LMX model leaders discriminate in their treatment of subordinates. This has a significant impact on how role definitions evolve from the negotiations that take place between a superior and a subordinate.

Research using the LMX model, which is measured with a variety of instruments, including a seven-item LMX-7 scale (Scandura & Schriescheim, 1994), suggest that it is a useful model for determining the social distance between a leader and member. Also, it has been found to be successful in determining how that distance results in mutual influencing and participation in decision-making. Fairhurst

and Chandler (1989) used the approach to distinguish between "in-group," "middle-group," and "out-group" relationships between a leader and follower that affect the mutual influence and decision-making processes. Their study of how one leader's conversational resources differed during independent interactions with three subordinates demonstrated how flexible the leader was when attempting to influence a subordinate.

Another study by Fairhust (1993) investigated the influence of gender in the construction of high, medium, and low LMX relationships. This study demonstrated that leaders exchanged their resources (personal and positional) for expected performance and contributions of followers. By studying the discourse patterns of routine work conversations for 6 female leaders and their 16 male and female members, Fairhurst (1993) concluded that there are two ways in which gender contributed to the social construction of the leader-member exchange. The first effect was that women leaders tended to construct a concern for the relationship in high and medium LMXs. The second way in which gender added to the nature of the LMX was shown when leaders and members had inconsistent levels of status within the dyad resulting in gender-based behavior. For example, an inexperienced leader resorted to the traditionally feminine approach of exerting influence over a domineering male subordinate by "massaging his ego" and using her "femininely wiles" (Fairhurst, 1993). With more experience, this female leader may utilize her legitimate, formal authority to influence the outcome of conversations with a low LMX employee.

In addition to consistently illustrating the extent of mutual influencing and employee participation in decision making matters, the LMX model has also been used as a measure of exchange quality. Phillips and Bedeian (1994) investigated how the personal and interpersonal characteristics of the leader-member exchange related to the interaction quality. Their field study of 84 registered nurses examined personal or interpersonal attributes that were believed to be related to the quality of the leader-member exchange. Results indicated that when a leader and a member share similar attitudes, they are likely to have a strong exchange quality (Phillips & Bedeian, 1994). Another attribute strongly associated with LMX quality was extroversion. According to the same researchers (1994), when a subordinate was characterized as an extrovert, there was a greater opportunity to influence the superior, thus increasing the quality of the exchange. Phillips and Bedeian (1994) suggested that knowledge of these interpersonal communication attributes is an important link to the training and development of organizational leaders.

Other studies using the LMX model to study superior-subordinate relationships have established that it is an effective measure for gaining knowledge of communication and mentoring (Scandura & Schriesheim, 1994), the nature of communication during job transfers (Kramer, 1995), employee citizenship and impression management behavior (Wayne & Green, 1993), issues of perceived organizational fairness (Sias & Jablin, 1995), and the relationship of LMX and employee satisfaction and job performance (Mossholder, Bedeian, Niebuhr, & Wesolowski, 1994). A recent study of communication among workers introduced a

new area of research using the LMX. Sias and Jablin (1995) concluded that the

nature of superior-subordinate relationships is so critical to individuals within the

organization that those relationships affect those outside the dyad. The researchers

conclude that the superior-subordinate communication is so powerful that it affects

communication within the entire work group or organization.

Communication Apprehension

Communication Apprehension (CA) was defined by Virginia Richmond (1978)

as a person's fear or anxiety associated with real or anticipated communication with

another person or persons. While it is normal to be motivated to communicate in

many situations, it is also normal to avoid communication in some. The desire to be

left alone and the fear of an unpleasant outcome are two primary reasons why people

avoid communication (McCroskey & Richmond, 1992). This is usually referred to as

shyness. One cause of shyness is communication apprehension, which occurs when a

"normal" person is afraid to communicate.

Researchers in the area of communication apprehension (Ayres, Ayres, &

Sharp, 1993; Fisher & Infante, 1973, McCroskey & Richmond, 1992; Richmond,

1978) have acknowledged two kinds of CA. Trait CA is the general fear or anxiety

associated with interaction in most settings. State CA is the fear or anxiety limited to

a specific type of communication encounter, such as giving a public speech to a

specific group of people. According to Richmond (1978), an individual with the

personality-type trait, which is likely to be triggered in any communicative situation,

is at one end of the CA continuum; at the other end of the continuum is an individual with a highly context-specific state which is likely to be triggered only in a specific communicative context.

Measuring communication apprehension has proved to be a difficult task due to the complexity of the condition and the difficulty of applying measurements in real-life (non-simulated) interactions. McCroskey (1970) reported several measures of communication apprehension, such as instruments designed by Glikinson in 1942 and Paul in 1966 to measure stage fright, and an instrument developed by Friedrich in 1970 to measure such factors as speech anxiety, exhibitionism, and reticence. These and other early researchers of CA generally used one of three types of instruments: observer ratings, devices for indexing physiological changes, and self-report scales.

One of the most popular measures of communication apprehension in current literature is McCroskey's Personal Report of Communication Apprehension, known as the PRCA (McCroskey & Richmond, 1992). This self-reporting instrument contains 24 statements concerning the individual's feelings about communicating with others and can be completed within minutes. The PRCA has been used to study the dynamic and stable qualities of CA in terms of an assimilation theory perspective (Beatty & Behnke, 1980). For example, how CA affected communication and productivity in brainstorming groups (Jablin & Sussman, 1978), how occupational choices were affected by communication apprehension (McCroskey, Richmond, Daly & Cox, 1975), and how CA was shown to be related to job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviors (Gibbs, Rosenfeld, & Javidi, 1994).

Research of communication apprehension has shown that it impacts individuals in the world of work. A study of 196 undergraduate students enrolled in a basic communications course reported that their occupational choices were affected by their level of communication apprehension (Daly & McCroskey, 1975). For example, students who experienced low levels of CA typically chose occupations requiring effective communication skills. Students with high levels of CA perceived low-communication jobs as the most desirable. The study indicated that, overall, communication apprehension was a strong predictor of both attitude toward the desirability of occupations and the actual choice of profession that an individual will make (Daly & McCroskey, 1975).

Research also shows that communication apprehension is a factor for individuals during the interviewing phase of the employment process, as well as when an individual is working within an organization. The relationship between CA and the hiring process has received some attention in the literature. The Personal Report of Communication Apprehension in Employment Interviews (PCRAEI), developed by Ayres, Ayres, & Sharp (1993), is a reliable and valid indicator of CA in employment interviews. These researchers (1993) conducted a study using their new instrument to measure the level of CA during an employment interview. They found that interviewees with high levels of interview communication apprehension also reported having entertained negative thoughts when imagining the actual interview. In contrast, those with relatively low interview CA scores reported fewer negative thoughts when imagining the interview process.

A study of the relationship of CA and leadership in small task-oriented groups revealed that individuals with high levels of CA were less likely to emerge as leaders in small working groups (Hawkins & Stewart, 1991). Those who emerged as leaders in this study were individuals who were rated as having low CA.

Job satisfaction has also been found to be impacted by an employee's self-reported CA. According to a study of 142 bank employees, results indicated that workers' oral CA is related to one aspect of their job satisfaction (Gibbs, Rosenfeld, & Javidi, 1994). The results showed that employees with high CA were less satisfied with their bosses than employees with low levels of communication apprehension. McCroskey and Richmond (1979) suggested that this phenomenon may be due to the fact that supervisors appear to be more of a threat to employees with high CA than others because any supervisor communication with a high CA may be perceived as distasteful or stressful.

Conflict Communication Studies

Conflict is an inevitable and consequential component of organizational life. Researchers have recognized that conflict is often a positive aspect of organizational life (Blake & Mouton, 1964) and organizations in which there is little or no conflict may stagnate (Rahim, Garett, & Buntzman, 1992). Organizational theorists (Rahim et al., 1992) generally agree that organizational conflict should be managed, rather than resolved, in a manner that enhances individual, group, and systemwide effectiveness. Rahim and his colleagues (1992) defined the management of organizational conflict as

"the diagnosis of and intervention in conflict of intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, and intergroup levels" (p. 424).

Research into conflict generally centers around five styles of handling interpersonal conflict in organizations: integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising. These styles, which were first suggested by Mary P. Follet (Rahim & Blum, 1994), have provided a foundation for measuring conflict. Putnam and Wilson's (1982) Organizational Communication Conflict Instrument (OCCI) and the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI II) developed by Rahim (1983) are two commonly used tools for measuring conflict among individuals. The OCCI was developed by Putnam and Wilson (1982) in response to low reliability found in other conflict instruments, and because of their belief that research of conflict styles ignored the vital role of communication in the design and measurement of strategies to handle conflicts. It was designed to assess conflict strategies in specific hypothetical situations. Researchers who critique the OCCI (Wilson & Waltman, 1988) have found it to be a successful tool for assessing verbal and nonverbal conflict tactics and behaviors.

The ROCI-II has been shown to successfully produce scores that reflect the strength of participant's preferences for conflict resolution styles. The styles were based on Blake and Mouton's (1964) identification of five conflict strategies: integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising (Conrad, 1991).

The study of conflict and communication has emerged as a major concern among communication scholars (De Roche, 1994; Putnam & Folger, 1988; Smith &

Eisenberg, 1987) and this review will focus specifically on the research of dyads

including superior-subordinate and peer communication during conflict situations.

A study involving supervisor-subordinate dyads in 49 parks and recreational

districts reported a relationship between conflict resolution styles and employee

commitment to the organization. London and Howat (1978) found that the superiors

choice of using confrontation to resolve conflict, instead of the options of

withdrawing, smoothing, compromising, and forcing, resulted in a positive

relationship to employee commitment.

Other studies have focused on superior-subordinate relationships to garner

information regarding effective strategies and approaches to conflict (Canary &

Sptizberg, 1987; Monroe, Borzi, & DiSalvo, 1989; Papa & Natalle, 1989; Richmond,

Wagner, & McCroskey, 1983). Richmond et al. (1983) researched the connection

between a supervisor's behavior during a conflict situation and the employees'

perceptions of satisfaction with the supervisor and work. The authors reported that

the supervisor who strived to have a positive impact on an employee's overall

perception of satisfaction should, among other things, reduce communication anxiety

by using an employee-centered leadership style approach and avoid exercising a

dominant conflict management style.

A study of the patterns of behavior enacted by particularly difficult

subordinates (Monroe, Borzi, & DiSalvo, 1989) identified four behaviors, apparent

compliance, relational leverage, alibis, and avoidance, as being markedly different

from most models of conflict resolution. The researchers suggested that typical

resolution tactics were not workable with these individuals because of their general

lack of understanding of how to solve problems. Short of developing a new model to

address difficult subordinates, the researchers suggested learning strategies for

managing rather than resolving conflict with these individuals (Monroe et al., 1989).

Papa and Natalle (1989) studied the effect of gender and conflict strategy

selection, and discovered that although clear behavioral differences existed among

dyads involving male-male, male-female, and female-female, there was no reported

difference in satisfaction levels of participants. Another study investigated how

conflict strategy types and communicator gender affected perceptions of

appropriateness and effectiveness (Canary & Spitzbert, 1987). In this study of peer

interaction, the researchers determined that gender did not affect participants'

perceptions of communication nor were women seen as significantly more appropriate

or effective than males in handling conflict scenarios.

Summary

Communications studies have encompassed a substantial field of research in

the social sciences. Researchers who have focused on issues of interpersonal

communication in organizations have concluded that it is an essential component of

organizational life. Weick (1969) wrote that the single most important function of an

individual in an organization is interpersonal communication. Shockley-Zalabak

(1991) also concluded that effective communication of an individual within an

organizational setting is necessary for the attainment of organizational goals and for individual productivity and satisfaction.

Communication Styles

Communication researchers have often considered communication style as the organizational member's most critical business behavior (Dell, 1992; Weick, 1979). Goodman (1992) reported that changes in the nature of work have had a direct impact on the workforce and on the way people communicate at work. Goodman wrote that traditional management communication styles have been replaced with collaborative styles. The new challenge to management, according to Brandon (1995), is to increase employees' effectiveness by providing the information they need to help them achieve their personal and organizational objectives. Brandon reported that employee communication must transfer business information critical to the organization's success, and the style in which critical information is transferred greatly influences the overall success of the interaction (Weick, 1969). Following a general overview of communication style and communication competence, this section of the literature review presents research about communication styles in organizational settings, communication styles and gender issues, and the Norton Communicator Style Measure as a tool for identifying communication styles.

Communication Style and Competence

Norton (1978) concluded that researchers who are interested in studying

interpersonal communication theory should deal with both the content and method of

communication. In developing a measure of communication styles, Norton (1983)

identified two perspectives of communication style research which have emerged from

the social science literature. These perspectives led to the conclusion that the way in

which a person communicates determines self-identity and affects others' perceptions

of the individual and that a person's communication style is an indicator of whether

the person likes the self. With this foundation, Norton (1983) determined that

communication style is a function that "gives form to content" (p. 19) and is a

function of "consistently recurring communicative associations" (p. 19). Norton

wrote that style entails the function of giving form to content and the pattern of

human interaction associated with the individual.

Thus, communication style has been broadly defined by Norton (1978) to

mean "the way one verbally and paraverbally interacts to signal how literal meaning

should be taken, interpreted, filtered, or understood" (p. 99). Paraverbal

communication is a therapeutic method which has developed from the study of

interpersonal communication between a therapist and a child. Heimlich and Mark

(1990) have defined paraverbal as meaning "parallel with verbal" (p. 19). Paraverbal

means that speech and dialogue is frequently substituted with other forms of

communication such as body language and other nonverbal actions.

Scholars have formulated various definitions of communication competence (Bochner & Kelly, 1974; Cegala, 1981; Haas & Arnold, 1995; Rubin & Martin, 1994). Stohl (1983) defined communication competence as "the ability to attain relevant interactive goals in specified social contexts using socially acceptable means and ways of speaking (writing) that result in positive outcomes with significant others" (p. 688). Rubin and Martin (1994) defined interpersonal communication competence as an impression formed as an outcome of a person's ability to manage interpersonal relationships in communication contexts.

Rubin and Martin (1994) researched interpersonal communication competence in terms of their Interpersonal Communication Competence Scale (ICCS) which measures competence in terms of 10 dimensions. These dimensions include self-disclosure, empathy, social relaxation, assertiveness, interaction management, altercentrism, expressiveness, supportiveness, immediacy, and environmental control. Results of their study indicated that ICC was related to communication satisfaction and to some interpersonal communication motives. Rubin and Martin also discovered a link between cognitive abilities and communication flexibility abilities.

Bochner and Kelly (1974) defined interpersonal competence as the ability to achieve three criteria: to achieve goals, to be interdependent, and to adapt to situations. Bochner and Kelly (1974) concluded that empathic communication, descriptiveness, self-disclosure, and behavioral flexibility are essential skills for a competent communicator.

Cegala (1981) wrote about the relationship of cognitive development and communication competence. He defined competence as multifaceted with many cognitive and behavioral dimensions. Cegala framed competence as knowing how and when to use language in social settings, and as the ability to achieve personal goals without causing a loss of face to self or others.

Regardless of how communication competence is defined, social science scholars have claimed that it is an essential skill for effective functioning in an organization (Haas & Arnold, 1995).

Communication Styles in Organizations

Communication styles of human resource professionals have been shown to effect the outcome of employment interviews. Ralston (1993) studied the impact of recruiter communication styles on applicants' satisfaction with the communication that took place during interviews. Ralston found that applicant satisfaction with the communication that took place during the interview was a significant and meaningful indicator of intent to accept a second interview. Ralston also reported that the recruiter's communication style was a significant predictor of applicant satisfaction. The specific communication style characteristics which Ralston found to be positively related to the applicants' satisfaction included dramatic, attentive, and dominant. Applicants were reported to react negatively to recruiters who were argumentative.

Gallois, Callan, and Palmer (1992) conducted a study that examined the influence of candidate and interviewer characteristics on hiring decisions. The

researchers (1992) concluded that interviewers perceived assertive candidates to have better interpersonal skills than either nonassertive or aggressive candidates. They also claimed that further research is needed to explore the extent to which an interviewer perceives his or her own communication style in a job interview to be similar to the style adopted by the candidate.

Researchers have shown that sales success is related to communication style (Notarantonio & Cohen, 1990; Pace, 1962; Williams & Spiro, 1984). Dion and Notarantonio (1992) studied real-estate agents' self-reports of communication style and sales performance and reported that the precise dimension of communication style was found to be strongly associated with sales performance. This study also showed that salespeople blended or combined several dimensions of communication styles during successful customer interactions.

Parrish-Sprowl, Carveth, and Senk (1994) explored the relationship between compliance-gaining strategy choice, communicator image, and salesperson effectiveness and found a link to communicator image and sales success. In this study, Parrish-Sprowl et al. (1994) found that salespeople who perceived themselves as being effective communicators were more successful than those salespeople who did not perceive themselves as being effective communicators. The researchers identified three possibilities for this outcome, including the notion that sales success might be a product of self-esteem rather than effective communication.

Leader and subordinate communication has frequently been shown to have an important impact on various organizational outcomes (Jablin, 1979; Kramer, 1995).

The affirming communicator style, which includes friendly, attentive, and relaxed dimensions, was investigated in a study of how subordinates perceived their supervisor's communication style. Edge and Williams (1994) concluded that nonmanagerial employees perceived supervisors who communicated with an affirming style as being more participative decision makers and that both exempt and nonexempt employees were more satisfied with supervisors who communicated with an affirming style.

The communication traits of supervisors was researched by Infante and Gorden (1991) in a study based on the notion that subordinates need freedom of communication and self-concept affirmation. Infante and Gorden found that employees in the workplace were more satisfied and more committed to the organization when they were not frustrated by a lack of freedom of communication and self-concept affirmation. The study for this indicated that a superior who was argumentative with an affirming communicator style contributed to the need satisfaction of employees, as argument encouraged free speech. Their data also supported the notion that a supervisor who communicated in a friendly, relaxed, attentive, and verbally nonaggressive style nurtures a favorable self-concept for subordinates.

Baker and Ganster (1985) studied leader communication styles in average and vertical dyads to determine whether leader communication styles vary or are consistent with all their subordinates. They found that leaders did maintain a high level of consistency on the evaluative dimension. Therefore, leaders who were

perceived as being open, friendly, calm, relaxed, and attentive appeared to be a stable individual difference in style which resulted in higher levels of subordinate satisfaction.

Martin and Rubin (1994) reported that "competent communicators are flexible" (p. 171). Competent communicators have the ability to adapt their communication style to meet the demands of different situations. Martin and Rubin (1994) supported this claim with the development and trial of their Communication Flexibility Scale, which showed that communication flexibility was positively related to social desirability and communication adaptability.

Honeycutt and Worobey (1987) studied how nurses perceived themselves communicating in a variety of nursing relationships and reported that the communication styles of flexible and friendly best predicted an effective communicator across nursing relationships within a hospital setting. Honeycutt and Worobey also showed that listening was the most important skill in all relationships, while managing conflict with hospital personnel was second.

Sorenson and Savage (1989) examined the ability of leaders to adapt communicator styles that enhanced problem-solving effectiveness in the context of small groups. Their findings showed that the two main communication dimensions of the leaders were dominance and supportiveness, and that effective leaders implemented a greater range of communicator styles than ineffective leaders.

Gender

The current literature investigating the relationship between gender and communication style has shown a lack of agreement about whether males and females use language differently. Simpkins-Bullock and Wildman (1991) concluded that three different global perspectives or viewpoints of gender and communication have emerged from the literature. The first of these viewpoints contends that women use language differently than men do, and the female style is characterized by tentative, uncertain, and deferential patterns of speech, such as the use of tag questions. This notion has been popular since Lakoff's (1975) book, Language and Women's Place, which reported that men typically use stronger and more direct patterns of speech than women. Others (Dubois & Crouch, 1975) have suggested the opposite. Their research showed that in one genuine social context men did and women did not use tag questions.

Concern for the listener characterizes the second perspective of gender differences in communication as presented by Simpkins-Bullock and Wildman (1991). In this framework, the feminine style of speech was not found to be hesitant from a lack of certainty but from a demonstration of concern for the listener. Researchers following this perspective believed that gender differences in speech styles stemmed from differences in intention and purpose (Eakins & Eakins, 1978). For example, men have been perceived as task-oriented and therefore communicate on a level of instrumentality. Women have been perceived as emotional and social and therefore communicate on a level of affiliation (Briton & Hall, 1995). The dialectic of

instrumentality and affection has been viewed by many as the foundation for exploring cross-gender relationships (Rawlins, 1992).

The third perspective reported by Simpkins-Bullock and Wildman (1991), relating gender to communication, departs from the first two views by focusing on how communicators differ in power or status rather than how they differ in gender. Scudder and Andrews (1995) asserted that gender differences in power strategies reflect actual power differences between men and women. Researchers from this perspective have claimed that people who have or are perceived as having authority or status use language differently than people who lack this status (Fishman, 1978). In other words, there is no gender difference in the use of language.

Other research has indicated that traditional gender stereotypes still govern peoples' perceptions of how men and women communicate in the work place. Cutler and Scott (1990) studied speaker gender and perceived apportionment of talk, and learned that female speakers were consistently rated by men and women as speaking more than men when, in reality, women were speaking less than the men. Brownwell (1993) concluded from her research on gender and communication issues in the hospitality industry that it has been particularly difficult for a woman to gain credibility in a male-dominated work environment. She explained about the importance of stereotypes in perceiving others, "a man talking with his co-workers is most often perceived as making a deal, while a woman in the same situation is seen as gossiping" (p. 55). A study by Frank (1988) showed that men perceived women

managers as being less knowledgeable than male managers yet women managers were perceived as having greater interpersonal skills.

From the viewpoint that men and women do communicate differently, in general, it is necessary to determine how these differences are played out in the work place. Wilson (1992) wrote, "language can be seen as a political object as it differentiates one group from another, men from women, men's language from women's language" (p. 885). Wilson reported that language is power and that (most) organizational settings are power structures dominated by a patriarchal hierarchy which uses male-oriented language.

Wilson's reasoning was based in the illustration of how male-oriented language dominates certain workplaces. In terms of technology, for example, Wilson's (1992) research has demonstrated that predominant use of male-oriented language has been used to the exclusion of females. The use of "war" and "religion" metaphors found in some of the companies studied by Wilson was associated with a predominantly "male" language, a language which women may feel distinctly uncomfortable using.

Women who attempt to function effectively in organizations, particularly in management, were typically confronted by a group of males who have worked together for years. Bradley (1980) suggested the expectation states theory to explain this difficulty. This approach maintained that a person's ability to enter the group and establish rapport through communication rests upon that person's external status. Bradley reported that, historically, female employees have experienced fewer opportunities to establish the desired level of status and thus have difficulty "catching

up" to men. His study of male and female speech patterns showed that speech styles associated with males were rated as being more intelligent by both sexes than those associated with females.

Communication styles, in this context, were identified with speaker social status and power (Erickson, Lind, Johnson, & O'Barr, 1978; Hun Ng & Bradac, 1993). The "powerless" speech style is characterized by the frequent use of such linguistic features as intensifiers, hedges, hesitation forms, and questioning intonations. The "powerful" speech style is marked by less frequent use of these features and is considered to be a typically male form of communication.

Speech styles proved to be of major importance in a study conducted during court proceedings to determine the relationship of speech style and impression formation. The results of the study by Erickson, Lind, Johnson, and O'Barr (1978) indicated that regardless of sex those who used the powerful style resulted in greater perceived credibility of the witnesses than did the powerless style. These findings supported the third perspective of gender differences and communication in that the affect of the communication was derived from perceived power and not gender.

Recent studies have investigated speech styles with the addition of a mixed speech style referred to as mixed gender, which is a combination of powerful and powerless styles (Geddes, 1992). Geddes assessed union members' perceptions of satisfaction and effectiveness in a style using powerful, powerless, and mixed gender speech styles. She concluded that the interaction between sex of manager and speech style was significant for perceived satisfaction but not for perceived effectiveness.

Geddes also reported that union respondents viewed the mixed gender/speech style as the most effective and the style most often associated with satisfied employees. These results suggested that the traditional notion of the ideal manager is changing and that successful management is not necessarily equated with males and masculinity.

Hackman, Hills, Patterson, and Furniss (1993) reported that traditionally masculine characteristics are effective for both female and male leaders. In their study, feminine characteristics were perceived as effective only when used by male leaders. Hackman et al. (1993) reported that female subordinates perceived leaders who displayed feminine gender-role characteristics to be less effective.

Montgomery and Norton (1981) studied male and female communication styles and reported that overall, men and women showed more similarities than differences in communication styles. Although men reported being more precise and women reported being more animated in their styles, the results indicated that the impression leaving and dominant styles are both associated with effective communication by both sexes.

Staley and Schockley-Zalabak (1986) published a study about the perceptions supervisors have of their female employees' communication competence, assuming that communication skills are a critical component of organizational effectiveness and promotability. Their results indicated that female professionals as a group rated themselves as more proficient in 12 of 15 communication competence categories than did supervisors as a group.

Other differences have been shown to exist in the communication styles of men and women, including listening styles (Brownwell, 1993; Tannen, 1994; Weaver & Kirtley, 1995), speaking styles (Brownwell, 1993; Fairhurst 1993), and nonverbal styles (Briton & Hall, 1995). Research has shown that many questions regarding gender and communication issues in the work place remain unanswered. In fact, recent studies suggest that the real issues are of power and not gender. For females in management roles, the problem of how to interact with subordinates, peers, and superiors is a complex issue that needs further exploration.

Communicator Style Measure

Norton (1978) defined communicator style as "the way one verbally and paraverbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, and understood" (p. 99). Norton (1978) explained communicator style in terms of 10 independent variables and one dependent variable. The independent variables, also called subconstructs, are dominant, dramatic, contentious, animated, impression leaving, relaxed, precise, attentive, open, and friendly. Norton reported that the dependent variable is communicator image, which is an evaluative response, for example, "I am a good communicator" (p. 99).

In the article "Foundation of a Communicator Style Construct," Norton (1978) defined the communicator styles. The dominant communicator is one who takes charge of social interactions. The dramatic communicator uses exaggerations, fantasies, and stories to highlight or understate message content. The contentious

communicator is argumentative. The animated communicator uses frequent and sustained eye contact, facial expressions and gestures. The impression leaving style is determined by whether an individual leaves an impression that is memorable. The relaxed style is whether an individual is relaxed or anxious and tense. The attentive communicator makes sure that the other person knows that he or she is being listened to. The open style is communicative, expansive, convivial, somewhat frank, and possibly outspoken; the opposite of this style is a communicator who is "poker-faced." The friendly communicator style includes not being hostile and encouraging intimacy. The communicator image, which is the dependent variable, stems from the person's own image of his or her communicative ability. Norton's (1978) construct was developed with the assumption that an individual who has a good communicator image will find it easy to interact with others.

Norton's (1978, 1983) Communicator Style Measure (CSM), which has been of much interest to organizational communication researchers due to its contribution to theory development and its successful applications in organizational settings (Edge & William, 1994), measures communicator styles in terms of the above variables. Norton's research has shown that two broad categories, or clusters, should occur in the smallest face configuration. The "active" cluster is emphasized by sending messages and by being talkative. The "passive" cluster is characterized by being open, receiver oriented, and other oriented. Norton (1978, 1983) concluded that the open communicator style, which is characterized as engendering trust, is a style that

may be included in either the passive or active category. Table 1 shows the

communicator style variables and categories.

Table 1

Communicator Style Variables and Clusters

Variables	Cluster/Category
Independent	
Dominant	Active
Dramatic	Active
Animated	Active
Contentious	Active
Impression Leaving	Active
Attentive	Passive
Friendly	Passive
Precise	Passive
Relaxed	Passive
Open	Active or Passive
Dependent	
Communicator Image	Positive or Negative

According to Norton (1978, 1983), the dominant and impression learning

styles were strongly associated with communicator image, with the dominant style

being the most important predictor of communicator image. Parrish-Sproul,

Carveth,& Senk (1994) reported that only the relaxed communicator style predicted

communicator image.

Norton (1978) reported that the communicator style measure construct has been shown to be structurally reliable and has remained reliable over a variety of studies (Norton & Pettigrew, 1977; Norton & Warnick, 1976; Norton, 1977; Pettegrew, 1977). Other researchers (Hansford & Hattie, 1987; Honeycutt & Worobey, 1987; Parrish-Sprowl, Carveth, & Senk, 1994) who have used the CSM have reported estimates of reliability that are sufficiently large to engage in meaningful research.

Summary

Social science researchers have been in agreement about the importance of communication competence in organizational settings (Duran & Kelly, 1994; DiSalvo, Larson, & Seiler, 1976, Rubin & Martin, 1994). DiSalvo et al. (1976) reported that one of the most important aspects of the business organization is its complex system of communication. Specific communication styles such as listening, affirming, and flexibility have been recognized as styles that have contributed to the success of organizational members. Indeed, further research is warranted to explore the relationship between communication style, gender, occupation, and organizational success.

Chapter Summary

The review of the related literature has revealed that the expanding role of the human resource manager in organizations has resulted in the need for human resource professionals to increase their knowledge and skills. The ability to communicate effectively with a variety of people is one of many important skills for human resource professionals. Researchers in the field of organizational communication have concluded that interpersonal communication competence and communication style are two essential variables for success in any business. Therefore, the communication style of human resource managers is a vital link for the overall well-being of an organization.

Chapter III

Research Questions and Methodology

The purpose for conducting this study was to determine the communication

styles of human resource managers in relation to communicator image, gender,

education level, and length of service. This study was significant because it provided

a foundation for further research regarding the communication styles of human

resource professionals.

The purpose of Chapter III is to provide an overview of the procedures

involved in the study. The overview includes the following sections: sample,

instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis.

<u>Sample</u>

Subjects for this study included human resource managers who were members

of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). SHRM is recognized as

the largest professional human resources organization in the United States. The

Society has chapters located throughout Alabama, including the Birmingham chapter

which has approximately 340 members. The sample included SHRM members in

attendance at the January 10, 1996, meeting of the Birmingham chapter and the

January 18, 1996, meeting of the Tuscaloosa chapter.

The 46-year-old Society for Human Resource Management is a world-wide professional association of human resource professionals (Adams, 1995). With more than 63,000 members and 430 chapters in the United States, the Society also serves members in 55 countries. Annual membership dues for professionals are $160, and student memberships are offered at a discount rate.

SHRM publishes HRMagazine, a monthly periodical featuring articles pertinent to human resource professionals (Adams, 1995). In addition to the monthly magazine, members enjoy the benefits of direct access to the Society through Prodigy and a home page on the World Wide Web to provide a user-friendly way for members to access knowledge and information (Adams, 1995).

Instrumentation

The survey instrument was designed to include three sections of relevant information (See Appendix A). The first section of the instrument included the demographic information of gender, education level, and length of service. The second section of the survey included detailed instructions for completing the questionnaire and an example illustrating how to record the answers on the instrument. The third section of the instrument included the Norton Communicator Style Measure, which features 51 Likert-type questions for the participants to complete.

The Norton (1978, 1983) Communicator Style Measure (CSM) is one of several instruments developed by Norton to measure communication styles. This

instrument is a self-reporting tool which measures an individual's perception of personal communication style and communication image.

The CSM is designed to measure 10 independent dimensions and one dependent dimension of communicator styles. Responses to each item are rated from 1 to 5, with the greatest amount of agreement with the statement associated with the highest rating (5).

The ten subconstructs, which are treated as independent variables, are scored with four items per subconstruct. The subconstructs include the following communication styles (Norton, 1978, 1983):

Dominant: The dominant style is characterized by taking charge of the social situation. This was addressed in questions 28, 35, 41, and 43.

Dramatic: The dramatic style is characterized by exaggerating, telling stories, rhythm, voice, and other stylistic devices to highlight or understate content. This was addressed in questions 18, 22, 32, and 48.

Contentious: The contentious style is characterized by being argumentative. This was addressed in questions 10, 36, 37, and 42.

Animated: The animated style is characterized by physical and other nonverbal cues. This was addressed in questions 17, 23, 44, and 47.

Impression Leaving: The impression leaving style is characterized by determining whether an individual has made a memorable impression upon others. This was addressed in questions 4, 5, 14, and 45.

Relaxed: The relaxed style is characterized as relaxing, open, and without anxiety. This was addressed in questions 8, 9, 15, and 16.

Attentive: The attentive style is characterized by empathizing and listening. This was addressed in questions 11, 20, 39, and 49.

Open: The open style is characterized as conversational, expansive, affable, frank, and approachable. This was addressed in questions 21, 24, 34, and 50.

Friendly: The friendly style is characterized as unhostile and willing to be intimate. This was addressed in questions 3, 6, 38, and 46.

Precise: The precise style is characterized as specific and unambiguous. This was addressed in questions 13, 27, 30, and 40.

Communicator image is the dependent variable and was addressed in questions 7, 19, 26, 29, and 51. Norton (1978) defined communicator image as the person's image of his or her communication ability, which is either good or bad.

The CSM has demonstrated high structural and internal validity as well as stability across a variety of studies (Norton, 1983). Honeycutt and Worobey (1987) distributed the CSM to 131 nurses from a public hospital in a southern city and reported that the reliability estimate for each style variable was consistently high. The alpha were reported as follows: open (.85), dramatic (.87), relaxed (.82), argumentative (.91), impression leaving (.96), dominant (.93), friendly (.93), precise (.95), attentive (.94), and animated (.98).

Ralston (1993) distributed the CSM to 220 graduating college students and 220 company recruiters and reported that the reliability for each of the substyles was

consistently high. The reliability estimates for Ralston's (1993) study ranged from (.89) to (.93). A more recent study by Parrish-Sprowl, Carveth, and Senk (1994) confirmed the reliability of the CSM. The open, dominant, relaxed, and communicator image communication styles were measured in this study of 160 real estate salespeople. Parrish-Sprowl et al. (1994) reported the standardized alpha as follows: open (.71), dominant (.75), relaxed (.76), and communicator image (.70).

This study was based on the current literature regarding communication styles and the variables of gender, education level, length of service, and communication image. Table 2 provides a summary of the literature base for communication studies and the variables presented in this study.

Table 2

Research Variables and Related Literature

Variables	Reference
Gender	Fairhurst, G. T. (1993) Geddes, D. (1992) Lakoff, R. T. (1975)
Educational Level	Champy, J. (1995) Drucker, P. (1994) Senge, P. (1990)
Length of Service	Brekelmans, M., Holvast, A., & Tartwijk, J. (1992) Daly, J. A., & McCroskey, J. C. (1975) Connor, T. N., & Williams, J. A. (1987)
Communicator Image	Jablin, F. (1979) Norton, R. (1978) Weick, K. (1979)

Data Collection

Each of the members attending Birmingham and Tuscaloosa January 1996

meetings of the Society for Human Resource Management received one letter and the

Communicator Style Measure survey during the luncheons. The Birmingham chapter

meeting was conducted on January 10, 1996, from noon until 1:00 p.m. The

Tuscaloosa chapter meeting was conducted on January 18, 1996, from noon until 1:00

p.m. A set of materials including the letter, the questionnaire, and a postage-paid

return address envelope, was placed at each members' seat prior to the

commencement of the meeting. The one-page letter provided information about the

study and asked for each members' voluntary participation (See Appendix B).

A set of instructions for completing the questionnaire was included in the second

section of the Communicator Style Measure.

The Birmingham and Tuscaloosa chapter members had the option to complete

the survey during the luncheon meeting or at a later date. Other Alabama chapters of

the SHRM, such as Huntsville, Mobile, and Montgomery, were identified as locations

for additional data collection if necessary.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the study was be analyzed using quantitative statistical

methods. A reliability analysis was performed to assure the appropriateness of each

style concept, including the communicator image. The research questions and the

corresponding statistical analysis that were addressed in the study are as follows:

1. To what extent do human resource managers have a positive communicator image?

This question was answered by analyzing the summary statistics regarding the five questions that pertain to the communicator image construct. This analysis was appropriate because it determines how respondents answered the questions and revealed whether they had a positive or a negative communicator image.

2. Is there a relationship between communicator image and active and passive communication styles?

A correlation was calculated to determine whether a relationship exists between communicator image and active and passive communication clusters. The correlation was the appropriate statistic because it indicates whether a relationship exists between more than two variables.

3. Does the communication style of the human resource manager significantly differ by the demographics variables of gender, education level, and length of service?

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was be used to determine whether the communication style of the human resource manager differed based on the demographic variables. ANOVA was the appropriate statistic because there were multiple variables which were compared.

4. Do the variables of gender, education level, and length of service predict the communicator style of human resource managers?

Using the variables of gender, education level, and length of service, a correlation statistic was used to determine whether the variables predict the communication style of human resource managers. The correlation analysis was the appropriate statistic because it is a manner in which to make predictions.

Chapter Summary

The quantitative study investigated the communication styles of human resource professionals in relation to gender, education level, and length of service. Human resource professionals volunteering to participate in the study were asked to complete the Norton Communicator Style Measure during a meeting of the Society of Human Resource Management. The overall instrument reliability was (.889), and the communicator image reliability was (.7). The data collected for this study was confidential and complied with all regulations set forth by The University of Alabama regarding the use of human subjects.

Chapter IV

Analysis of the Data

The purpose for conducting this study was to determine the communication

styles of human resource professionals in relation to communicator image, gender,

education level, and work experience. The study accomplished the first step of

determining the ideal or optimal communication skills and competencies of human

resource professionals by identifying a base of communication styles. Therefore, the

study was significant because it provided a foundation for further research regarding

the communication styles of human resource professionals.

Chapter IV provides a summary of the study and an analysis of the data. The

summary includes an overview of the importance of the communication styles of

human resource professionals and how the study was conducted. The analysis

includes an overview of the response and the statistical procedures used to answer the

research questions. The chapter concludes with a chapter summary.

Summary of the Study

Many researchers (Drucker, 1992, 1994; Martell & Carroll, 1995) have

recognized that human capital is one of the most important components of strategic

success for many companies. How people communicate within the workplace has

also been identified as an important factor for the success of both the individual as a

professional and the organization as a business in the 1990s and beyond (Brooks, 1995; Champy, 1995; Dell, 1992). The employees usually associated with communicating the issues that impact people within an organization are human resource professionals. Therefore, researchers have reported that communication competence is an essential function of human resource professionals (Champy, 1995; Euske & Roberts, 1987).

Researchers in the field of human resource development have reported that the role of human resource professionals has evolved from a position of training and recruiting to a position requiring extensive knowledge of strategic planning, finance, organizational change, and communication (Flipowski & Halcrow, 1992; Kesler, 1995). Further, human resource professionals who are engaged in organizational activities such as reengineering (Champy, 1995) are required to act as change agents. This transition from limited organizational participation to system-wide participation as business partner to upper-management and change agent has resulted in the need for human resource professionals to expand their knowledge and skills.

The purpose for conducting this study was to determine the communication styles of human resource professionals in relation to their communicator image, gender, education level, and length of service. This study was important because, although substantial research has been conducted regarding the communication styles and practices of employees within organizations (Baker, 1985; Brandon, 1995; Dion & Notarantonio, 1992; Jablin, 1979; Weick, 1979), little research has been conducted to determine the communicative practices of human resource professionals.

Additionally, the ability of the human resource professional to communicate effectively needs to be examined in detail. Because the need for human resource professionals to be effective in their positions is dependent upon their ability to communicate throughout the organization, it is important to study their communication styles.

The data for this study were collected from members of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) who work in the state of Alabama. Materials were distributed to SHRM members of the Birmingham and Tuscaloosa Chapters at their respective monthly meetings. Members received a cover letter (Appendix A), a questionnaire (Appendix B), a return postage-paid envelope, and a pencil. Data for the Birmingham Chapter were collected on January 10, 1996, and data from the Tuscaloosa Chapter were collected on January 18, 1996.

The Birmingham meeting hosted 115 SHRM members who were eligible to complete the questionnaire. The president of the chapter introduced the subject matter of the study during introductory remarks to members and guests. A total of 92 responses were eventually received from participants.

The Tuscaloosa meeting hosted 21 SHRM members who were eligible to complete the questionnaire. The president of the chapter introduced the subject matter of the study during introductory remarks to members and guests. A total of 17 responses were eventually received for data tabulation.

Of the 136 SHRM members who were invited to participate in the study, 109 members participated by responding to the questionnaire either at the meeting or at a

later date. The response rate for this study was 80%, and was deemed appropriate for data analysis.

Analysis of the Data

The Norton Communicator Style Measure I (CSM) features 51 Likert-like questions designed to measure 10 independent dimensions and one dependent dimension of communicator styles (Norton, 1983). Responses to each item were rated from 1 to 5, with the greatest amount of agreement with the statement associated with the highest rating (5). Four items (8, 15, 21, 51) were reversed and missing data was replaced with the score of "3" as suggested by Norton (1983). A total of 26 respondents to the survey chose not to complete the questionnaires; and were removed prior to performing the statistical analyses of the data. The total N for the data analysis was 83.

Summary Statistics

The summary statistics by item (Table 3) indicated that 4 (Yes) was the most frequently chosen response to the 51 questions on the CSM. This represented 42% of all responses. The second most frequently chosen response was 2 (no) at 25% followed by 3 (?) at 20%. The extreme responses of 1 (NO!) and 5 (YES!) were less common. Only 4% of the respondents marked NO! and 9% marked YES!. Of the 4,233 responses to the 51 items, the average score was 3.3 and the standard deviation was .91. N for the summary statistics was 83.

Table 3

Summary Statistics by Item

Item	NO! 1	no 2	? 3	yes 4	YES! 5	M	SD
1		.11	.04	.58	.28	4.0	.87
2		.06	.04	.45	.46	4.3	.81
3		.05	.11	.60	.25	4.0	.75
4		.01	.37	.52	1.00	3.7	.66
5		.07	.37	.45	.11	3.6	.78
6	.01	.16	.15	.54	.15	3.7	.96
7		.06	.29	.55	.10	3.7	.73
8	.01	.47	.16	.35	.01	2.9	.96
9		.19	.16	.53	.12	3.6	.94
10	.04	.53	.15	.27	.02	2.7	.98
11	.04	.40	.24	.31	.01	2.9	.95
12	.01	.04	.18	.60	.17	3.9	.77
13		.19	.34	.42	.05	3.3	.84
14		.06	.46	.39	.10	3.5	.75
15	.02	.55	.13	.27	.02	2.7	.97
16		.16	.27	.54	.04	3.5	.80
17	.01	.12	.22	.49	.16	3.7	.93
18	.05	.46	.16	.25	.08	2.9	1.10
19	.02	.23	.17	.42	.16	3.5	1.10
20		.12	.17	.59	.12	3.7	.83
21	.11	.43	.11	.30	.05	2.7	1.10
22	.07	.30	.15	.41	.07	3.1	1.10
23	.02	.19	.17	.48	.13	3.5	1.00
24		.16	.28	.45	.12	3.5	.90
25	.06	.35	.13	.40	.06	3.0	1.10
26	.01	.18	.27	.41	.13	3.5	.98
27	.02	.29	.25	.39	.05	3.1	.98
28	.02	.28	.23	.41	.06	3.2	.98
29	.01	.22	.11	.57	.10	3.5	.98
30	.01	.10	.24	.55	.10	3.6	.84
31	.13	.39	.22	.24	.02	2.6	1.10
32	.10	.42	.16	.30	.02	2.7	1.10
33	.01	.25	.16	.47	.11	3.4	1.00
34	.10	.36	.11	.40	.04	3.0	1.10
35	.10	.43	.28	.19		2.6	.91

Table 3 Continued

Item	NO! 1	no 2	? 3	yes 4	YES! 5	M	SD
36	.16	.47	.17	.21		2.4	.10
37	.07	.52	.17	.22	.02	2.6	.99
38		.07	.21	.54	.18	3.8	.81
39	.01	.12	.24	.45	.18	3.7	.95
40	.05	.36	.19	.36	.04	3.0	1.00
41	.01	.37	.23	.35	.04	3.0	.96
42		.28	.15	.48	.10	3.4	1.00
43	.04	.63	.15	.18	.01	2.5	.88
44	.02	.27	.25	.42	.04	3.2	.95
45		.15	.34	.46	.06	3.4	.81
46		.02	.15	.60	.23	4.0	.69
47		.17	.21	.51	.12	3.6	.91
48	.06	.46	.07	.40	.01	2.8	1.10
49		.10	.27	.06	.04	3.6	.71
50	.04	.28	.17	.46	.06	3.2	1.00
51	.05	.41	.47	.06	.01	2.6	.73
Total	.04	.25	.20	.41	.09	3.3	.92

Table 4 summarizes how respondents scored on the 10 communicator styles. Ten of the 83 respondents scored high for the communicator styles of animated, impression leaving, friendly, and precise. A total of 67% of the respondents viewed themselves as friendly communicators while 12% labeled themselves as argumentative communicators. The overall mean score was 13 with a standard deviation of 2.7.

Table 4

Summary Statistics by Communicator Style

Style	Score 5-9		10-14		15-19		20-25		M	SD
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Dominant	24	29	45	54	14	17			11.3	3.0
Dramatic	28	34	36	43	19	23			11.6	3.4
Animated	4	05	46	55	31	37	2	02	13.9	2.7
Contentious	25	30	48	58	10	12			11.1	2.7
Impression Leaving	2	02	40	48	39	47	2	02	14.2	2.5
Attentive	3	04	51	62	29	35			13.9	2.2
Friendly	1	01	27	33	52	63	3	04	15.6	2.3
Precise	7	08	48	58	28	34			13.0	2.5
Relaxed	11	13	53	64	18	22	1	01	12.7	2.7
Open	14	17	50	60	17	20	2	02	12.4	3.0
Total:	119	15	444	55	257	31	10	02	13.0	2.7

Note. The lowest possible score was 5 and the highest possible score was 25. A high score indicated a preference for the communicator style.

Instrument and variable reliability was tested with the Cronbach Coefficient using the standardized variables (Table 5). The overall instrument reliability was (.889), and the communicator image reliability was (.7).

Table 5

Reliability of Communicator Styles and Communicator Image

Style	Cronbach Coefficient Alpha
Dominant	.8
Dramatic	.8
Animated	.6
Contentious	.6
Impression Leaving	.8
Attentive	.6
Friendly	.7
Precise	.6
Relaxed	.7
Open	.7
Communicator Image	.7

Tables 6, 7, and 8 provide a summary the communicator styles by the demographic variables of gender, education, and experience. The average score for communicator style by gender was 12.9 for men and 13.1 for women (Table 6). Men scored lowest in the dominant (10.8) and dramatic (10.8) scales and highest on the friendly (15.2) scale. The lowest score for female participants was contentious (10.9) and the highest was friendly (15.7). Five surveys were missing data on the gender variable.

Table 6

Summary Statistics of Communicator Styles by Gender

Style	Male		Female	
	M	SD	M	SD
Dominant	10.8	3.4	11.6	2.8
Dramatic	10.8	3.0	11.7	3.6
Animated	12.7	2.4	14.6	2.6
Contentious	11.6	2.6	10.9	2.8
Impression Leaving	13.9	2.7	15.0	2.3
Attentive	13.7	2.3	13.9	2.3
Friendly	15.2	2.3	15.7	2.4
Precise	14.3	2.0	12.5	2.6
Relaxed	13.4	2.7	12.3	2.7
Open	12.5	3.0	12.3	3.0
Total	12.9	2.6	13.1	2.7

Note. Male $\underline{N}$=24; female $\underline{N}$=54; missing data $\underline{N}$=5.

Table 7 provides a summary of the communicator styles by the education level of human resource professionals. The mean score for each of the three levels of education was almost equal with a master's degree at 13.1 and a bachelor's degree and high school diploma at 13.0, and participants with a high school education scored high on friendly (16.1) and animated (15.2). Participants with a bachelor's degree scored high on friendly (15.6) and impression leaving (14.6). Human resource professionals with a master's degree scored high on friendly (15.4), impression leaving (14.3) and animated (14.2). The education variable was missing data on seven surveys.

Table 7

Summary Statistics of Communicator Styles by Education Level

	High School		Bachelor's		Master's	
Style	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Dominant	11.2	2.1	11.3	3.4	11.9	2.2
Dramatic	12.8	3.6	10.9	3.4	12.4	2.9
Animated	15.2	2.4	13.7	2.9	14.2	2.3
Contentious	10.5	2.8	11.5	2.9	10.7	2.6
Impression Leaving	13.6	1.8	14.6	2.8	14.3	2.1
Attentive	14.3	2.9	13.9	2.2	13.3	2.2
Friendly	16.1	2.8	15.6	2.2	15.4	2.5
Precise	12.2	2.5	13.5	2.3	12.6	2.2
Relaxed	12.1	2.4	12.6	3.0	12.6	2.2
Open	11.7	2.0	12.1	3.0	12.7	2.2
Total	13.0	2.5	13.0	2.82	13.1	2.5

Note. High school $\underline{N}=11$; bachelor's $\underline{N}=44$; master's $\underline{N}=21$; missing data $\underline{N}=7$.

Human resource professional employment experience was summarized in Table 8. The majority of respondents had at least 11 years of experience (33) with only 5 participants having worked in the field for one year or less. The highest average score of (16.2) for friendly was within the 8 to 10 years of experience category. The 8 to 10 years category also has the highest mean score of 13.6. Scores for the communicator styles of dominant, precise, and open decreased overall with mature employees. The score for contentious increased from (9.4) for novice employees to (10.6) for seasoned human resource managers. The experience category was missing data on eight surveys.

Table 8

Summary Statistics of Communicator Styles by Experience

	Years 0-1		2-4		5-7		8-10		11+	
Style	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Dominant	10.2	2.4	13.0	2.6	11.8	3.3	12.2	2.3	10.7	3.0
Dramatic	10.0	2.4	11.7	2.8	11.8	4.1	13.0	2.7	11.3	3.7
Animated	13.6	.9	14.5	2.4	14.5	3.2	12.4	2.1	14.1	2.9
Contentious	9.4	2.6	12.5	2.4	11.5	2.9	11.2	2.4	10.6	2.8
Impression Leaving	13.0	2.7	15.3	3.0	14.3	2.3	15.3	2.7	14.0	2.1
Attentive	13.0	1.7	14.5	2.6	13.3	1.9	13.7	3.0	13.9	2.2
Friendly	15.0	4.1	15.7	1.9	15.6	1.8	16.2	2.7	15.5	2.4
Precise	11.4	1.5	13.9	2.2	12.5	3.3	12.8	3.5	13.2	2.2
Relaxed	11.2	2.2	12.5	2.5	12.0	2.5	14.8	2.6	12.6	2.7
Open	12.4	2.6	13.0	2.0	11.7	3.4	14.2	3.5	12.0	2.9
Total:	11.9	2.31	13.7	2.4	12.9	2.9	13.6	2.8	12.8	2.7

Note. 0-1 years $\underline{N}$=5; 2-4 years $\underline{N}$=15; 5-7 years $\underline{N}$=13; 8-10 years $\underline{N}$=9; 11+ years $\underline{N}$=33; missing data $\underline{N}$=8.

Research Questions

The research questions and the corresponding statistical analyses that were performed were as follows.

Research Question 1: To what extent do human resource managers have a positive communicator image?

The summary statistics (Table 9) for how the human resource professionals responded to the five questions pertaining to communicator image indicate that 72% of the employees had a positive communicator image. Six participants scored 15 and

17 participants scored 14 or less for a total of 28% of the responses in the negative and neutral categories.

None of the 83 respondents scored 5, which was the lowest score and indicated a poor communicator image. The lowest score reported was 10 which meant one individual recorded a negative response for each of the image questions. Twenty-four human resource professionals reported that they had a high communicator image. One individual's self-perception of communicator image was near perfect, with a score of 24 out of 25.

Table 9

Communicator Image Frequency Table

Image Score	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
10	1	1.2	1	1.2
11	1	1.2	2	2.4
12	4	4.8	6	7.2
13	1	1.2	7	8.4
14	10	12.0	17	20.5
15	6	7.2	23	27.7
16	7	8.4	30	36.1
17	6	7.2	36	43.4
18	9	10.8	45	54.2
19	14	16.9	59	71.1
20	14	16.9	73	88.0
21	3	3.6	76	91.6
22	3	3.6	79	95.2
23	2	2.4	81	97.6
24	2	2.4	83	100

Note. Lowest possible communicator image = 5; highest possible communicator image = 25.

Research Question 2: Is there a relationship between communicator image and active and passive communication styles?

Table 10 summarizes the Pearson correlation analysis that was performed to determine whether a relationship existed between communicator image and active and passive communication styles. The correlation showed that a significance of (.0001) was present for active and passive communication styles. Table 10 illustrates that the relationship between image and active communicators was positive (0.46654) but the relationship between image and passive communicators was greater (0.56236). Subsequently, as self-image increases so does the relationship to the active communication style.

Table 10

Correlation Analysis of Communicator Image and Active and Passive Communication Styles

	Active	Passive
Image		
Pearson Correlation	0.46654	0.56236
Significance	.0001	.0001

Research Question 3: Does the communication style of human resource managers significantly differ by the demographic variables of gender, education level, and experience?

A three-way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether managers responded to the questions differently in terms of their gender, education and

experience as human resource professionals. The total N for this statistical analysis

of the demographic variables was 74. Nine cases of missing data were reported.

Tables 11 through 40 summarize the ANOVA statistics regarding gender, education,

and experience in relation to each of the 10 communicator styles.

A significance of (0.0595) was reported for the dominant communicator style

and experience (Table 13); however, no relationship was reported for the dominant

style and gender or education. A significance of (0.0143) was reported on Table 17

for the animated communicator style by gender, and significance of (0.0022) was

reported on Table 32 for the precise communicator style and gender. The open

communicator style was shown to be significant in relation to the education level of

human resource managers. Table 39 illustrates a significance of (0.0515) for

education and open communication.

Four of the interactions of communication style and demographic variables

showed a significant relationship. The communication styles of dramatic, contentious,

impression leaving, attentive, friendly, and relaxed showed no relationship with

gender, education and experience.

Table 11

Analysis of Variance for Dominant by Gender

	N	M	SD	F	P
Male	21	11.1	3.4	0.31	0.5789
Female	53	11.6	2.8		
Total	74	11.4	3.1		

Table 12

Analysis of Variance for Dominant by Education

	N	M	SD	F	P
High School	11	11.2	2.1	1.26	0.2915
Bachelor's	43	11.4	3.4		
Master's	20	11.9	2.2		
Total	74	11.5	2.6		

Table 13

Analysis of Variance for Dominant by Experience

	N	M	SD	F	P
0-1	5	10.2	2.4	2.39	0.0595
2-4	15	13.0	2.6		
5-7	13	11.8	3.3		
8-10	9	12.2	2.3		
11+	32	10.7	3.0		
Total	74	11.6	2.7		

Table 14

Analysis of Variance for Dramatic by Gender

	N	M	SD	F	P
Male	21	11.2	3.0	0.39	0.5379
Female	53	11.8	3.6		
Total	74	11.5	3.3		

Table 15

Analysis of Variance for Dramatic by Education

	N	M	SD	F	P
High School	11	12.7	3.6	2.88	0.0633
Bachelor's	43	10.9	3.5		
Master's	20	12.6	2.8		
Total	74	12.1	3.3		

Table 16

Analysis of Variance for Dramatic by Experience

	N	M	SD	F	P
0-1	5	10.0	2.4	1.02	0.4055
2-4	15	11.7	2.8		
5-7	13	11.8	4.0		
8-10	9	13.0	2.7		
11+	32	11.4	3.7		
Total	74	11.6	3.1		

Table 17

Analysis of Variance for Animated by Gender

	N	M	SD	F	P
Male	21	12.7	2.4	6.33	0.0143
Female	53	14.6	2.7		
Total	74	13.65	2.6		

Table 18

Analysis of Variance for Animated by Education

	N	M	SD	F	P
High School	11	15.1	2.4	1.53	0.2250
Bachelor's	43	13.7	2.9		
Master's	20	14.2	2.4		
Total	74	14.3	2.6		

Table 19

Analysis of Variance for Animated by Experience

	N	M	SD	F	P
0-1	5	13.6	0.9	1.46	0.2258
2-4	15	14.5	2.4		
5-7	13	14.5	3.2		
8-10	9	12.4	2.1		
11+	32	14.1	2.9		
Total	74	13.8	2.3		

Table 20

Analysis of Variance for Contentious by Gender

	N	M	SD	F	P
Male	21	11.6	2.7	0.85	0.3605
Female	53	11.0	2.8		
Total	74	11.3	2.75		

Table 21

Analysis of Variance for Contentious by Education

	N	M	SD	F	P
High School	11	10.5	2.8	0.07	0.9287
Bachelor's	43	11.4	2.8		
Master's	20	10.8	2.7		
Total	74	11.0	8.3		

Table 22

Analysis of Variance for Contentious by Experience

	N	M	SD	F	P
0-1	5	9.4	2.6	1.53	0.2048
2-4	15	12.5	2.4		
5-7	13	11.5	2.9		
8-10	9	11.2	2.4		
11+	32	10.6	2.8		
Total	74	11.04	2.6		

Table 23

Analysis of Variance for Impression Leaving by Gender

	N	M	SD	F	P
Male	21	14.1	2.8	0.91	0.3434
Female	53	14.5	2.4		
Total	74	14.3	2.6		

Table 24

Analysis of Variance for Impression Leaving by Education

	N	M	SD	F	P
High School	11	13.6	1.8	0.93	0.3999
Bachelor's	43	14.7	2.8		
Master's	20	14.3	2.1		
Total	74	14.2	2.2		

Table 25

Analysis of Variance for Impression Leaving by Experience

	N	M	SD	F	P
0-1	5	13.0	2.7	1.39	0.2482
2-4	15	15.3	3.0		
5-7	13	14.3	2.3		
8-10	9	15.3	2.7		
11+	32	14.0	2.2		
Total	74	14.4	2.6		

Table 26

Analysis of Variance for Attentive by Gender

	N	M	SD	F	P
Male	21	13.7	2.3	0.18	0.6720
Female	53	13.9	2.3		
Total	74	13.8	2.3		

Table 27

Analysis of Variance for Attentive by Education

	N	M	SD	F	P
High School	11	14.3	2.9	0.36	0.7019
Bachelor's	43	14.0	2.2		
Master's	20	13.4	2.3		
Total	74	13.9	2.5		

Table 28

Analysis of Variance for Attentive by Experience

	N	M	SD	F	P
0-1	5	13.0	1.7	0.65	0.6284
2-4	15	14.5	2.6		
5-7	13	13.3	1.9		
8-10	9	13.7	3.1		
11+	32	13.9	2.2		
Total	74	13.7	2.3		

Table 29

Analysis of Variance for Friendly by Gender

	N	M	SD	F	P
Male	21	15.5	2.3	0.10	0.7565
Female	53	15.7	2.4		
Total	74	15.6	2.35		

Table 30

Analysis of Variance for Friendly by Education

	N	M	SD	F	P
High School	11	16.1	2.8	0.15	0.8617
Bachelor's	43	15.6	2.1		
Master's	20	15.5	2.6		
Total	74	15.8	2.5		

Table 31

Analysis of Variance for Friendly by Experience

	N	M	SD	F	P
0-1	5	15.0	4.1	0.23	0.9217
2-4	15	15.7	1.9		
5-7	13	15.6	1.8		
8-10	9	16.2	2.7		
11+	32	15.6	2.4		
Total	74	15.6	2.6		

Table 32

Analysis of Variance for Precise by Gender

	N	M	SD	F	P
Male	21	14.7	1.7	10.16	0.0022
Female	53	12.5	2.6		
Total	74	13.6	2.2		

Table 33

Analysis of Variance for Precise by Education

	N	M	SD	F	P
High School	11	12.2	2.5	0.96	0.3896
Bachelor's	43	13.5	2.3		
Master's	20	12.7	3.1		
Total	74	12.8	2.6		

Table 34

Analysis of Variance for Precise by Experience

	N	M	SD	F	P
0-1	5	11.4	1.5	0.74	0.5702
2-4	15	13.9	2.2		
5-7	13	12.5	3.2		
8-10	9	12.8	3.5		
11 +	32	13.3	2.2		
Total	74	12.8	2.5		

Table 35

Analysis of Variance for Relaxed by Gender

	N	M	SD	F	P
Male	21	13.4	2.7	1.40	0.2402
Female	53	12.3	2.7		
Total	74	12.9	2.7		

Table 36

Analysis of Variance for Relaxed by Education

	N	M	SD	F	P
High School	11	12.1	2.4	0.18	0.8388
Bachelor's	43	12.7	3.0		
Master's	20	12.7	2.3		
Total	74	12.5	2.6		

Table 37

Analysis of Variance for Relaxed by Experience

	N	M	SD	F	P
0-1	5	11.2	2.2	1.92	0.1172
2-4	15	12.5	2.5		
5-7	13	12.0	2.5		
8-10	9	14.8	2.6		
11+	32	12.5	2.7		
Total	74	12.6	2.5		

Table 38

Analysis of Variance for Open by Gender

	N	M	SD	F	P
Male	21	12.8	2.9	0.05	0.8183
Female	53	12.4	3.0		
Total	74	12.6	2.95		

Table 39

Analysis of Variance for Open by Education

	N	M	SD	F	P
High School	11	11.7	2.0	3.10	0.0515
Bachelor's	43	12.1	3.1		
Master's	20	13.8	2.7		
Total	74	12.5	2.6		

Table 40

Analysis of Variance for Open by Experience

	N	M	SD	F	P
0-1	5	12.4	2.6	1.63	0.1783
2-4	15	13.0	2.0		
5-7	13	11.7	3.4		
8-10	9	14.2	3.5		
11+	32	12.1	2.9		
Total	74	12.7	2.9		

Research Question 4: Do the variables of gender, education level, and experience predict the communication styles of human resource managers?

The correlation analysis of communicator style and the three demographic variables indicated three significant relationships among the variables. Table 41 illustrates the Pearson Correlation and significance level for each of the communicator styles and gender. A significance of (0.0035) for animated and (0.0027) for precise was reported. The animated communication style was positively related to gender, and the precise communication style is negatively related to gender.

Table 41

Pearson Correlation Analysis of Communicator Styles by Gender

Style	Pearson Correlation	Significance
Dominant	0.01307	0.2538
Dramatic	0.12872	0.2614
Animated	0.32713	0.0035
Contentious	- 0.11063	0.3349
Impression		
Leaving	0.12113	0.2908
Attentive	0.04498	0.6957
Friendly	0.09491	0.4085
Precise	- 0.33532	0.0027
Relaxed	- 0.19276	0.0909
Open	- 0.02284	0.8427

Note. $N = 78$.

Table 42 showed a significance of (0.0490) for the open communicator style

and the education level of human resource managers. This was a positive

relationship. The correlation analysis of communicator styles and experience (Table

43) showed no significance.

Table 42

Correlation Analysis of Communicator Styles by Education

Style	Pearson Correlation	Significance
Dominant	0.08063	0.4887
Dramatic	0.03229	0.7818
Animated	- 0.07320	0.5298
Contentious	- 0.01926	0.8688
Impression		
Leaving	0.06147	0.5979
Attentive	- 0.13700	0.2379
Friendly	- 0.08841	0.4476
Precise	0.02411	0.8362
Relaxed	0.05118	0.6606
Open	0.22661	0.0490

Note. N=76.

Table 43

Correlation Analysis of Communicator Styles by Experience

Style	Pearson Correlation	Significance
Dominant	- 0.18765	0.1069
Dramatic	0.02101	0.8580
Animated	- 0.04576	0.6966
Contentious	- 0.12670	0.2787
Impression		
Leaving	- 0.07221	0.5381
Attentive	- 0.00142	0.9904
Friendly	0.01111	0.9246
Precise	0.04902	0.6762
Relaxed	0.11660	0.3191
Open	- 0.06557	0.5762

Note. N=75

Chapter Summary

Because human resource professionals have a specific role in the success of organizations in this new wave of experimental management approaches, it is imperative that these professionals possess the skills to communicate about complex issues with employees of all levels. The purpose for conducting this study was to determine the communication styles of human resource managers in relation to communicator image, gender, education level, and work experience. The Norton Communicator Style Measure was used to examine the self-perceptions of how human resource employees communicate. Human resource professionals who are members of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) in the state of Alabama completed the questionnaire and provided an adequate response rate of 80% This study provided a foundation for understanding the communication styles of human resource professionals.

More than 70% of the human resource professionals participating in the current study reported a positive self-perception of communicator image. The study illustrated that a significant relationship (.0001) for communicator image and active and passive communication styles exists. The three-way ANOVA revealed four significant relationships between communicator styles and demographic variables. Dominant communicators were related to years of experience, open communicators were related to education, and the animated and precise styles were related to the gender of the human resource managers. The correlation to determine whether the demographic variables predicted the communication styles of human resource

professionals revealed three significant relationships among the variables. The animated communicator style was found to be positively related to females, the precise style was found to be negatively related to females, and the open style was found to be positively related to education. No significant differences were found for work experience in predicting the communicator styles of human resource professionals.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

The current study was designed to better understand human resource professionals' self-perceptions of communicator style and image. The importance of human resource employees in organizational behavior was established throughout the Review of Related Literature. For example, the role of the human resource manager was determined to be the catalyst for implementing and promoting the reengineering process necessary for American business and industry to compete in a global economy (Champy 1995, Overman, 1994). In addition to the understanding of human resource managers, the concepts of communication and communicator image were determined to be vital to organizational success (Shockley-Zalabak, 1994; Weick, 1979). Literature findings demonstrated that communication style can indeed be influenced by gender (Fairhurst, 1993), education (Drucker, 1994), professional work experience (Brekelmans, Holvast, & Tartwijk, 1992), and self-perceptions of communicator image (Norton, 1978).

The current chapter was designed to provide a summary of the study and to explore the conclusions and recommendations which could be drawn from the analysis. The chapter is divided into four sections: Summary of the Study, Conclusions, Recommendations, and Chapter Summary.

93

Summary of the Study

The purpose for conducting this study was to determine the communication styles of human resource management professionals in relation to their communicator image, gender, education, and experience. Many researchers have studied the relationship of manager communication style to such variables as employee satisfaction and performance (Dion & Notarantoni, 1992) and teacher communication style to such variables as classroom organization and staff development (Brekelmans, Holvast, & Tartwijk, 1992.) Researchers have not studied the relationship of human resource manager communication style to such variables as communicator image, gender, education level and experience.

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), a professional organization for human resource development employees, representing the interests of more than 64,000 professional and student members from around the world, was identified as the sample. The Birmingham and Tuscaloosa SHRM Chapter presidents agreed to the request for collecting data. Data were collected with the Norton Communicator Style Measure I instrument.

Data were collected during regularly scheduled Chapter luncheon meetings. 109 members chose to participate by returning completed and uncompleted questionnaires for a response rate of 80%. Twenty-six incomplete forms were omitted from the data analysis for a total N of 83.

Four research questions were presented in the study for analysis.

Research Question 1: To what extent do human resource managers have a positive communicator image?

Summary statistics (Table 9) showed 72% of the human resource professionals reported a positive perception of their communicator image. Approximately 7% of the managers were neutral, and 12% reported low or negative perceptions about their communicator image.

Research Question 2: Is there a relationship between communicator image and active and passive communication styles?

The Pearson correlation (Table 10) showed that communicator image was significantly related (.0001) to both the active and passive communication styles.

Research Question 3: Does the communication style of human resource managers significantly differ by the demographic variables of gender, education, and experience?

The 3-way ANOVA showed that four relationships existed among the communication style and demographic variables. The dominant communication style was significantly related to experience (Table 13), the animated communicator style was significantly related to gender (Table 17), the precise communicator style was significantly related to gender (Table 32), and the open communicator style was significantly related to education (Table 39).

Research Question 4: Do the variables of gender, education level, and experience predict the communication styles of human resource managers?

The Pearson correlation demonstrated that demographic variables predicted communicator style for three relationships. The animated communication style was positively related to gender (Table 41), the precise communication style was negatively related to gender (Table 41), and the open communication style was positively related to education (Table 42).

Conclusions

Knowledge of the communication styles of human resource professionals has been advanced by this study. This section presents conclusions about the data analysis, the data collection techniques, and the appropriateness of the instrument.

1. Most human resource professionals in the study claimed to have a good communicator image. Nearly 30% of the respondents, however, were uncertain or held a poor opinion about their personal communication style.

2. There was a relationship between active and passive communication styles and perceptions of communicator image. Subsequently, as the human resource professionals' communicator image increases, so does the relationship to the active communicator style.

3. The demographic variables of gender and education showed a significant relationship in predicting how the managers responded to the questions. Female human resource professionals tended to score higher on the animated scale and male human resource professionals tended to score higher on the precise scale. Managers with a master's degree tended to score higher on the open communicator style.

4. The response rate of 80% from the SHRM Birmingham and Tuscaloosa Chapter members was an adequate sample for this study. In addition, the members were varied according the their gender, education, and experience.

5. The instrument was reliable (.899) for measuring the communication styles and images of the human resource professionals. However, the reliability of the specific communication styles varied from (.6) to (.8).

6. The statistics that were performed to analyze the data were appropriate for explaining the concept of communication style and image in relation to the demographic variables of gender, education, and work experience.

Recommendations

1. Future research in the field of interpersonal communication styles of human resource professionals should consider subordinate employees' perceptions of how the human resource managers communicate. This comparison would present the managers with the opportunity of understanding how others perceive their actions. Researchers may discover a significant difference in self and other perceptions.

2. Future research should seek connections between the perceived effectiveness and performance levels of human resource professionals and their communication style. This would establish a knowledge base for determining ideal or preferred communication styles of human resource professionals.

3. Further exploration of managers' self-perception of communicator image should be explored in terms of active and passive communication styles. For

example, this study reported that image is related to active and passive communication styles. Analyzing this data in terms of gender could narrow the focus and provide insight into the clustering of styles. Interaction among male and female employees could ultimately improve from a greater understanding of gender-related communication differences.

4. Organizations should place more emphasis on the communicative processes in the workplace. Human resource professionals should receive training on how gender, education, and experience impacts personal style of communication in the workplace. Communication training is essential because effective communication impacts the success of the individual and the organization.

5. Higher education programs in leadership, organizational studies, and management should respond to the needs of business and industry by providing instruction on communication theory and styles. Communication instruction is essential for students who are preparing for successful careers in a global economy.

6. Further research should be conducted to explore new advances and alternative approaches for measuring the communication styles of individuals in the workplace. Although the Norton Communicator Style Measure was determined to be a reliable instrument, reliability of the 10 communication style constructs was varied.

Chapter Summary

The Review of the Related Literature revealed that the expanding role of the human resource manager in organizations has resulted in the need for human resource professionals to increase their knowledge and skills. The ability to communicate effectively with a variety of people was identified as one of many important skills for human resource professionals. Researchers in the field of organizational communication have concluded that interpersonal communication competence and communication style are two essential variables for success in any business. Consequently, the communication style of human resource managers was determined to be a vital link for the overall well-being of an organization.

The first step of determining the ideal or optimal communication skills and competencies of human resource professionals was to identify a base of communicator image and style. The current study was successful in determining the communication styles of human resource professionals in relation to communicator image, gender, education, and work experience. The majority of human resource managers reported that they communicate in a positive manner. Additionally, a manager's gender, level of education, and years of work experience were related to self-perceptions of communication image and style. The current study showed that the gender and education level of human resource managers may predict a specific communication style.

The results of the data analysis for the current study provided a foundation for understanding how human resource professionals perceived their communication

processes. Additional research about the nature of communication in organizational settings will expand resources for determining appropriate and competent interaction styles for human resource professionals.

References

Adams, J. T. (Ed.). (1995). HRMagazine, 40(6), 8-10.

Aryes, J., Aryes, D. M., & Sharp, D. (1993). A progress report on the development of an instrument to measure communication apprehension in employment interviews. Communication Research Reports, 10(1), 87-94.

Baker, D. D., & Ganster, D. C. (1985). Leader communication style: A test of average versus vertical dyad linkage models. Group & Organizational Studies, 10 (3), 242-259.

Beatty, M. J., & Behnke, R. R. (1980). An assimilation theory perspective of communication apprehension. Human Communication Research, 6(4), 321-325.

Blake, R. R., & Mouton, J. S. (1964). The managerial grid. Houston: Gulf.

Bochner, A. P., & Kelly, C. W. (1974). Interpersonal communication instruction-theory and practice: A symposium. The Speech Teacher, 23(4), 279-301.

Bradley, P. H. (1980). Sex competence and opinion deviation: An expectation states approach. Communication Monographs, 47, 101-110.

Brandon, M. C. (1995). Employee communication: From nice to necessity. Communication World, 12(3), 20-22.

Brekelmans, M., Holvast, A., & Tartwijk, J. (1992). Changes in teacher communication styles during the professional career. Journal of Classroom Interaction, 27(1), 13-22.

Briton, N. J., & Hall, J. A. (1995). Beliefs about female and male nonverbal communication. Sex Roles, 32(1/2), 79-90.

Brooks, S. S. (1995). Managing a horizontal revolution. HR Magazine, 40 (6), 52-58.

Brownwell, J. (1993). Communicating with credibility: The gender gap. The Cornell Hospitality and Restaurant Association Quarterly, 34(2), 52-61.

Byars, L. L., & Rue, L. W. (1991). Human resource development (3rd ed.). Homewood, IL: Irwin.

Canary, D. J., & Spitzberg, B. H. (1987). A model of the perceived competence of conflict strategies. Human Communication Research, 15(4), 1989.

Cegala, D. J. (1981). Interaction involvement: A cognitive dimension of communicative competence. Communication Education, 30, 109-121.

Champy, J. (1995). Reengineering management: The mandate for new leadership. New York: Harper Business.

Charon, J. M. (1992). Symbolic interactionism: An introduction, an interpretation, an integration (4th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Conrad, C. (1991). Communication in conflict: Style-strategy relationships. Communication Monographs, 58, 135-155.

Cross. K. F., Feather, J. J., & Lynch, R. L. (1994). Corporate Renaissance: The art of reengineering. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Cutler, A., & Scott, D. (1990). Speaker sex and perceived apportionment of talk. Applied Psycholinguistics, 11(3), 253-272.

Daly, J. A., & McCroskey, J. C. (1975). Occupational desirability and choice as a function of communication apprehension. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 22 (4), 309-313.

Dansereau, F., & Markham, S. (1987). Superior-subordinate communication: Multiple levels of analysis. In F. M. Jablin, L. L. Putnam, D. H. Roberts, & L. A. Porter (Eds.), Handbook of Organizational Communication (pp. 343-388). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Deal, T. E., & Kennedy, A. (1982). Corporate cultures. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Deetz, S. (1995). Transforming communication transforming business. Creskill, NJ: Hampton.

Dell, S. (1992). A communication-based theory of the glass ceiling: Rhetorical sensitivity and upward mobility within the technical organization. IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication, 35(4), 230-235.

Del Mar, D., & Collins, R. D. (Eds.). (1976). Classics in scientific management: A book of readings. Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama.

Deluga, R. J., & Perry, J. T. (1991). The relationship of subordinate upward influencing behavior, satisfaction, and perceived superior-subordinate effectiveness with leader-member exchanges. Journal of Occupational Psychology, 64, 239-252.

De Roche, C. P. (1994). On the edge of regionalization: Management style and the construction of conflict in organizational change. Human Organization, 53 (3), 209-218.

Dion, P. A., & Notarantonio, E. M. (1992). Salesperson communication style: The neglected dimension in sales performance. The Journal of Business Communication, 29(19), 63-77.

DiSalvo, V., Larsen, D. C., & Seiler, W. J. (1976). Communication skills needed by persons in business organizations. Communication Education, 25(4), 269-275.

Drucker, P. (1993). Managing for the future. New York: Plume.

Drucker, P. (1994, November). The age of social transformation. The Atlantic Monthly, 274 (5), 53-80.

Dubois, B. L., & Crouch, I. (1975). The question of tag questions in women's speech: They don't really use more of them, do they? Language in Society, 4, 289-294.

Duran, R. L., & Kelly, L. (1994). The role of social experience in the development of communication competence. Communication Research Reports, 11 (2), 119-126.

Eakins, B. W., & Eakins, R. G. (1978). Sex differences in human communication. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Edge, H. A., & Williams, M. L. (1994). Affirming communicator style of supervisor and subordinate use of upward influence tactics: An analysis of nonmanagerial and managerial employees. Communication Research Reports, 11(2), 201-208.

Erickson, B., Lind, E., Johnson, B., & O'Barr, W. (1978). Speech style and impression formation in a court setting: The effects of "powerful" and "powerless" speech. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 14, 226-279.

Euske, N. A., & Roberts, K. H. (1987). Evolving perspectives in organizational theory: Communication implications. In F. M. Jablin, L. L. Putnam, K. H. Roberts, & L. W. Porter (Eds.), Handbook of organizational communication. Newbury Park: Sage.

Fairhurst, G. T. (1993). The leader-member exchange pattern of women leaders in industry: A discourse analysis. Communication Monographs, 60, 321-351.

Fairhurst, G. T., & Chandler, T. A. (1989). Social structure in leader-member interaction. Communication Monographs, 56, 215-239.

Fisher, J. Y., & Infante, D. A. (1973). The relation between communication anxiety and human motivation variables. The Central States Speech Journal, 24(4), 246-252.

Fishman, P. M. (1978). Interaction: The work women do. Social Problems, 25, 397-406.

Fliplowski, D., & Halcrow, A. (1992). HR leaders are powerful. Personnel Journal, 71(12), 48-56.

Frank, E. J. (1988). Business students perceptions of women in management. Sex Roles, 19(1/2), 107-119.

Fullan, M. F. (1993). Change forces: Probing the depths of educational reform. Bristol, PA: Falmer.

Gallois, C., Callan, V. J., & Palmer, J. M. (1992). The influence of applicant communication style and interviewer characteristics on hiring decisions. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 22(13), 1041-1060.

Geddes, D. (1992). Sex roles in management: The impact of varying power of speech styles on union members' perception of satisfaction and effectiveness. The Journal of Psychology, 126(6), 589-607.

Gibbs, V. L., Rosenfeld, L. B., & Javidi, M. (1994). On-the-job relationships among self-reported oral communication apprehension, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviors. Communication Research Reports, 11(2), 209-220.

Goodman, M. B. (1992). Changes in the nature of work and in the work force present challenges to communicators. IEEE Transactions On Professional Communication, 35(1), 24-25.

Haas, J. W., & Arnold, C. L. (1995). An examination of the role of listening in judgments of communication competence in co-workers. The Journal of Business Communication, 32(2), 123-139.

Hackman, M. Z., Hills, M. J., Patterson, T. J., & Furniss, A. H. (1993). Leaders' gender-role as a correlate of subordinates' perceptions of effectiveness and satisfaction. Perceptual and Motor Skills, 77, 671-674.

Hammer, M., & Champy, J. (1993). Reengineering the corporation: A manifesto for business revolution. New York: Harper Business.

Hansford, B. C., & Hattie, J. A. (1987). Perceptions of communicator style and self-concept. Communication Research, 14(2), 189-203.

Hawkins, K., & Stewart, R. A. (1991). Effects of communication apprehension on perceptions of leadership and intergroup attraction in small task-oriented groups. The Southern Communication Journal, 57(1), 1-10.

Heimlich, E. V., & Mark, A. J. (1990). Paraverbal communication with children: Not through words alone. New York: Plenum.

Honeycutt, J. M., & Worobey, J. L. (1987). Impressions about communication styles and competence in nursing relationships. Communication Education, 36(3), 217-227.

Hun Ng, S., & Bradac, J. (1993). Power in language. Newbury Park, NJ: Sage.

Infante, D. A., & Gorden, W. I. (1991). How employees see the boss: Test of an argumentative and affirming model os supervisors' communicative behavior. Western Journal of Speech Communication, 55, 294-304.

Jablin, F. M. (1979). Superior-subordinate communication: The state of the art. Psychological Bulletin, 86(6), 1201-1222.

Jablin, F. M., & Sussman, L. (1978). An exploration of communication and productivity in real brainstorming groups. Human Communication Research, 4 (4), 329-337.

Katz, D., & Kahn, R. L. (1966). The social psychology of organizations. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Kesler, G. C. (1995). A model and process for redesigning the HRM role, competencies, and work in a major multi-national corporation. Human Resource Management, 34(2), 229-252.

Kramer, M. W. (1995). A longitudinal study of superior-subordinate communication during job transfers. Human Communication Research, 22(1), 39-64.

Kreps, G. (1990). Organizational communication: Theory and practice. White Plains, NY: Longman.

Lakoff, R. T. (1975). Language and women's place. New York: Harper.

London, M., & Howat, G. (1978). The relationship between employee commitment and conflict resolution behavior. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 13, 1-14.

Markowich, M. M. (1995). HR's leadership role in the third wave era. HRMagazine, 40(9), 92-98.

Marquardt, M. J., & Engel, D. W. (1993). Global human resource development. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Martell, K., & Carroll, S. J. (1995). How strategic is HRM? Human Resource Management, 34(2), 253-267.

Martin. M. M., & Rubin, R. B. (1994). Development of a communication flexibility measure. The Southern Communication Journal, 59(2), 171-178.

McCroskey, J. C. (1970). Measures of communication-bound anxiety. Speech Monographs, 37(4), 269-277.

McCroskey, J. C., & Richmond, V. P. (1979). The impact of communication apprehension on individuals in organizations. Communication Quarterly, 27, 55-61.

McCroskey, J. C., & Richmond, V. P. (1992). Communication apprehension and small group communication. In R. S. Cathcart, & L. A. Samovar (Eds.), Small group communication: A reader. (pp. 361-374). Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown.

McCroskey, J. C., Richmond, V. P., Daly, J. A., & Cox, B. G. (1975). The effects of communication apprehension on interpersonal interaction. Human Communication Research, 2, 51-65.

Miles, R. E. (1965). Human relations or human resources? Harvard Business Review, 43(4), 148-155.

Monroe, C., Borzi, M. G., & DiSalvo, V. S. (1989). Conflict behaviors of difficult subordinates. The Southern Communication Journal, 34, 311-329.

Montgomery, B. M., & Norton, R. W. (1981). Sex differences and similarities in communicator style. Communication Monographs, 48, 121-132.

Mossholder, K. W., Bedeian, A. G., Niebuhr, R. E., & Wesolowski, M. A. (1994). Dyadic duration and the performance-satisfaction relationship: A contextual perspective. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 24, 1251-1269.

Nadler, L, & Nadler, Z. (1990). The handbook of human resource development (2nd ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Norton, R. W. (1977). Teacher effectiveness as a function of communicator style. In B. Ruben (Ed.), Communication yearbook 1. New Brunswick, NJ: Transactions, Inc.

Norton, R. W. (1978). Foundation of a communicator style construct. Human Communication Research, 4(2), 99-112.

Norton, R. W. (1983). Communicator style: Theory, applications and measures. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Norton, R. W., & Pettegrew, L. (1977). Communicator style as an effect determinant of attraction. Communication Research, 4, 257-282.

Norton, R. W., & Warnick, B. (1976). Assertiveness as a communication construct. Human Communication Research, 1, 62-66.

Notarantonio, E. M., & Cohen, J. L. (1990). The effects of open and dominant communication styles on perceptions of the sales interaction. The Journal of Business Communication, 27, 171-184.

Overman, S. (1994). Big bang change: Reengineering HR. HR Magazine, 39(6), 50-53.

Pace, W. R. (1962). Oral communication and sales effectiveness. Journal of Applied Psychology, 44, 487-488.

Papa, M. J., & Natalle, E. J. (1989). Gender, strategy selection, and discussion satisfaction in interpersonal conflict. Western Journal of Speech Communication, 53, 260-272.

Parrish-Sprowl, J., Carveth, R., & Senk, M. (1994). The effect of compliance-gaining strategy choice and communicator style on sales success. The Journal of Business Communication, 31(4), 291-310.

Peters, T. J., & Waterman, R. H. (1982). In search of excellence. New York: Harper & Row.

Pettegrew, L. (1977). An investigation of therapeutic communicator style. In B. Ruben (Ed.), Communication yearbook 1. New Brunswick, NJ: Transactions.

Phillips, A. S., & Bedeian, A. G. (1994). Leader-follower exchange quality: The role of personal and interpersonal attributes. Academy of Management Journal, 37(4), 990-1001.

Putnam, L. L., & Folger, J. P. (1988). Communication, conflict, and dispute resolution. Communication Research, 15(4), 349-359.

Putnam, L. L., & Wilson, C. E. (1982). Communicative strategies in organizational conflicts: reliability and validity of a measurement scale. In M. Burgoon, & N. E. Doran (Eds.), Communication Yearbook 6 (pp. 629- 654). Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Rahim, M. A. (1983). A measure of styles of handling interpersonal conflict. Academy of Management Journal, 26, 368-376.

Rahim, M. A., & Blum, A. A. (Eds.). (1994). Global perspectives on organizational conflict. Wesport, CT: Praeger.

Rahim, M. A., Garrett, J. E., & Buntzman, G. F. (1992). Ethics of managing interpersonal conflict in organizations. Journal of Business Ethics, 11, 423-432.

Ralston, S. M. (1993). Applicant communication satisfaction, intent to accept second interview offers, and recruiter communication style. Journal of Applied Communication Research, 21 (1), 53-65.

Rawlins, W. M. (1992). Friendship matters: Communication, dialectics, and the life course. New York: Alkine De Gruyter.

Richmond, V. P. (1978). The relationship between trait and state communication apprehension and interpersonal perceptions during acquaintance stages. Human Communication Research, 4(4), 338-349.

Richmond, V. P., Wagner, J. P., & McCroskey, J. C. (1983). The impact of perceptions of leadership style, use of power, and conflict management style on organizational outcomes. Communication Quarterly, 31(1), 27-36.

Rubin, R. B., & Martin, M. M. (1994). Development of a measure of interpersonal communication competence. Communication Research Reports, 11(1), 33-44.

Scandura, T. A., & Schriesheim, C. A. (1994). Leader-member exchange and supervisor career mentoring as complementary constructs in leadership research. Academy of Management Journal, 37(6), 1588-1602.

Scudder, J. N., & Andrews, P. H. (1995). A comparison of two alternative models of powerful speech: The impact of gender upon the use of threats. Communication Research Reports, 12(1), 25-33.

Senge, P. M. (1990). The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization. New York: Doubleday Currency.

Sergiovanni, T. J., & Starratt, R. J. (1988). Superivision: Human perspectives (4th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Shein, E. H. (1992). Organizational culture and leadership. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Shockley-Zalabak, P. (1991). Fundamentals of organizational communication: Knowledge, sensitivity, skills, values. New York: Longman.

Shockley-Zalabak, P. (1994). Understanding organizational communication: Cases, commentaries, and conversations. New York: Longman.

Sias, P. M., & Jablin, F. M. (1995). Differential superior-subordinate relations, perceptions of fairness, and coworker communication. Human Communication Research, 22(1), 5-38.

Simkins-Bullock, J. A., & Wildman, B. G. (1991). An investigation into the relationship between gender and language. Sex Roles, 24(3), 149-160.

Smith, R. C., & Eisenberg, E. M. (1987). Conflict at Disneyland: A root-metaphor analysis. Communication Monographs, 54, 368-380.

Sorenson, R. L., & Savage, G. T. (1989). Signaling participation through relational communication. Group & Organizational Studies, 14(3), 325-354.

Staley, C., & Schockley-Zalabak, P. (1986). Communication proficiency and future training needs of the female professional: Self-assessment vs. supervisors' evaluations. Human Relations, 39(10), 891-902.

Stohl, C. (1983). Developing a communication competence scale. In R. N. Bostrom (Ed.), Communication Yearbook 7 (pp. 685-716). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Stohl, C. (1995). Organizational communication: Connectedness in action. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tannen, D. (1994). Talking from 9 to 5. New York: William Morrow and Company.

Taylor, F. W. (1919). Shop management. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Taylor, F. W. (1967). The principles of scientific management. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Thurow, L. C. (1992). Head to head: The coming economic battle among Japan, Europe, and America. New York: Morrow.

Toffler, A., (1995). Creating a new civilization: The politics of the third wave. Atlanta: Turner.

Waldron, V. R. (1991). Achieving communication goals in superior-subordinate relationships: The multi-functionality of upward maintenance tactics. Communication Monographs, 58, 289-306.

Watkins, K. E., & Marsick, V. J. (1993). Sculpting the learning organization: Lessons in the art and science of systemic change. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Wayne, S. J., & Green, S. A. (1993). The effects of leader-member exchange on employee citizenship and impression management behavior. Human Relations, 46 (12), 1431-1439.

Weaver, J. B., & Kirtley, M. D. (1995). Listening styles and empathy. The Southern Communication Journal, 60(2), 131-141.

Weber, M. (1968). Economy and society. New York: Bedminster.

Weick, K. E. (1969). The social psychology of organizing. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Weick, K. E. (1979). The social psychology of organizing (2nd ed.). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Wick, C. W., & Leon, L. S. (1995). From ideas to action: Creating a learning organization. Human Resource Management, 34(2), 299-311.

Williams, K. C., & Spiro, R. L. (1984). Communication style in the salesperson-customer dyad. Journal of Marketing Research, 22, 434-442.

Wilson, F. (1992). Language, technology, gender, and power. Human Relations, 45(9), 883-904.

Wilson, S. R., & Waltman, M. S. (1988). Management Communication Quarterly, 1(3), 367-388.

Wolfe, R. A. (1995). Human resource management innovations: Determinants of their adoption and implementation. Human Resource Management, 34(2), 313-327.

Yeung, A., Brockbank, W., & Ulrich, D. (1994). Lower cost, higher value: Human resources functions in transition. Human Resource Planning, 17(3), 1-16.

York, R. O., & Denton, R. T. (1990). Leadership behavior and supervisory performance: The view from below. The Clinical Supervisor, 8(1), 93-109.

Yukl, G. (1994). Leadership in organizations. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Appendix A

Communicator Style Measure

COMMUNICATOR STYLE MEASURE I

4 DIGIT ID NUMBER

Your Gender: ◯ Male ◯ Female

Education: ◯ H.S. ◯ Bachelor's ◯ Master's

Experience: ◯ 0-1 ◯ 2-4 ◯ 5-7
◯ 8-10 ◯ 11+

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

INSTRUCTIONS:

You have impressions of yourself as a communicator. These impressions include your sense of the way you communicate. This measure focuses upon your sensitivity to the way you communicate or what is called your communicator style.

The questions are not designed to look at what is communicated; rather, they explore the way you communicate.

Because there is no such thing as a "correct" style of communication, none of the following items have right or wrong answers.

Please do not spend too much time on the items. **Let your first inclination be your guide.** Try to answer as honestly as possible. All responses will be strictly confidential.

Some questions will be difficult to answer because you honestly do not know. For these questions, however, please try to determine which way you are leaning and answer in the appropriate direction.

The following scale is used for each item:

YES! = strong agreement with the statement

yes = agreement with the statement

? = neither agreement nor disagreement with the statement

no = disagreement with the statement

NO! = strong disagreement with the statement

For example, if you agree with the following statement, "I dislike the coldness of winter," then you would darken in the "yes" response as indicated:

NO! no ? yes YES!
◯ ◯ ◯ ⬤ ◯

Some of the items will be similarly stated. But each item has a slightly different orientation. Try to answer each question as though it were the only question being asked.

Finally, answer each item as it relates to a general face-to-face communication situation - namely, the type of communicator you are most often.

		NO!	no	?	yes	YES!
1.	I am comfortable with all varieties of people.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
2.	I laugh easily.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
3.	I readily express admiration for others.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
4.	What I say usually leaves an impression on people.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
5.	I leave people with an impression of me which they definitely tend to remember.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
6.	To be friendly, I habitually acknowledge verbally other's contributions.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
7.	I am a very good communicator.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
8.	I have some nervous mannerisms in my speech.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
9.	I am a very relaxed communicator.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
10.	When I disagree with somebody I am very quick to challenge them.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
11.	I can always repeat back to a person exactly what was meant.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
12.	The sound of my voice is very easy to recognize.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
13.	I am a very precise communicator.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

9834

	NO!	no	?	yes	YES!
14. I leave a **definite** impression on people.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
15. The rhythm or flow of my speech is sometimes affected by my nervousness.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
16. Under pressure I come across as a relaxed speaker.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
17. My eyes reflect **exactly** what I am feeling when I communicate.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
18. I dramatize a lot.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
19. I always find it **very** easy to communicate on a one-to-one basis with strangers.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
20. Usually, I **deliberately** react in such a way that people **know** that I am listening to them.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
21. Usually I do not tell people much about myself until I get to know them well.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
22. **Regularly** I tell jokes, anecdotes and stories when I communicate.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
23. I tend to **constantly** gesture when I communicate.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
24. I am an **extremely** open communicator.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
25. I am vocally a loud communicator.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
26. In a small group of strangers I am a **very good** communicator.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
27. In arguments I insist upon very precise definitions.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
28. In most social situations I generally speak very frequently.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
29. I find it extremely easy to maintain a conversation with a member of the opposite sex whom **I have just met.**	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
30. I like to be strictly accurate when I communicate.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
31. Because I have a loud voice I can easily break into a conversation.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
32. **Often** I physically and vocally act out what I want to communicate.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
33. I have an assertive voice.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
34. I readily reveal personal things about myself.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
35. I am dominant in social situations.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
36. I am very argumentative.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
37. Once I get wound up in a heated discussion I have a hard time stopping myself.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
38. I am an **extremely** friendly communicator.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
39. I really **like** to listen **very carefully** to people.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
40. Very often I insist that other people document or present some kind of proof for what they are arguing.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
41. I try to take charge of things when I am with people.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
42. It bothers me to drop an argument that is not resolved.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
43. In most social situations I tend to come on strong.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
44. I am very expressive nonverbally in social situations	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
45. The **way** I say something **usually** leaves an impression on people.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
46. Whenever I communicate, I tend to be very encouraging to people.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
47. I actively use **a lot** of facial expressions when I communicate.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
48. I **very frequently** verbally exaggerate to emphasize a point.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
49. I am an **extremely attentive** communicator.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
50. As a rule, I openly express my feelings and emotions.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

51. Out of a random of six people, including myself, I would probably have a better communicator style than (darken one choice)

◯ 5 of them
◯ 4 of them
◯ 3 of them
◯ 2 of them
◯ 1 of them
◯ None of them

1232

Appendix B

Letter to Human Resource Professionals

Letter to Human Resource Professionals

Date

Society for Human Resource Management
Birmingham Chapter or Tuscaloosa Chapter

Dear SHRM Member:

The research literature, the popular press, and individuals in organizations consistently report that communication is an essential component of professional success. I am asking you to participate in a study of SHRM members that will examine your communication style.

I am a graduate student in the Area of Professional Studies at The University of Alabama. This study will provide the data for my dissertation on the communication styles of human resource professionals and their relationship to communicator image, gender, education level, and length of service.

Attached is an instrument for you to complete. Please understand that all information that you provide will be completely confidential. All Data will be accumulated and averaged so that individual responses remain anonymous. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate or to cease participation at any time without penalty.

Please follow the directions carefully to maintain conditions necessary for reliable research. It will take you about 6 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Please respond to each item to the best of your knowledge.

Again, thank you for your time and participation. It reflects on your personal interest in improving organizational leadership. If you have any questions you can contact Jennifer Payne at The University of Alabama, Area of Professional Studies, 110 Graves Hall, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487, (phone) 205/348-0664.

Sincerely,

Jennifer M. Payne
Graduate Student