

EDITORIAL

Communication Media in Education

Although this editorial addresses classroom lecturers most of all, it also speaks to school administrators, counsellors, librarians, and technicians as well. Since communication is, under numerous circumstances, difficult to impossible, any communicator who needs to express worthy ideas to another should use as many channels or media of communication as possible. Instead of relying on merely spoken or written communication, communicators intent on getting their message across to others should use more than one channel of communication. A multimedia approach to communication should be used. If the idea is important yet complex to the communicators - teachers, administrators, counsellors, librarians, technicians - and their auditors, then the communicators should use the voice or the pen along with other media of communication. Other media might include videotape recorders, overhead projectors, films, slides, pictures, realia, models, records, TV, radio and many other media that aid in the creation of understanding.

But, is this not common? Does not every school teacher, administrator, counsellor, librarian, and technician employ these devices? The Director of the Department of Communications Media at the University of Calgary reports that even though requests from faculty members at the University of Calgary for media and media workshops has increased tremendously over the past three to ten years, the potential use of the existing resources at the University of Calgary has not been exploited. If we wish to improve the lecturing, administering, and learning that schools should provide, we must plan to expend the energy it takes to get difficult yet valuable material across to others. We cannot restrict ourselves to a single communication medium. Professor Joe DeVito in his book entitled *Communicology* tells us that in classrooms, "especially in the large classrooms of from 100 to 1000 students, the teacher who simply lectures without any assistance from media is going to have a hard time securing and maintaining the interest and attention of the students." Professor DeVito emphasizes that without assistance from media, teachers limit themselves to one channel of communication. Along with Professor DeVito, this editorialist believes that by taking a multimedia approach to educational communication, although not a panacea, the multimedia approach will enhance our educational efforts.

This is plainly true. If we accept that it is true, we shall take the pains to transmit our thoughts through whatever media are necessary. If, on some occasion, a single medium, such as a memo, will accomplish our ends, then the memo is enough. But, on those other occasions where a memo, a lecture, a photograph, and a film may only approach communicating the meaning we have, then we must use all of these. If we are still short of our communication goal, we must next invent whatever media we can and expend the energy we can to help transmit our meaning.

We oftentimes must use one medium of communication due to limits of time, space, material, or funding. This editorial must limit itself to the medium of the written word. However, were this a lecture hall, a multimedia approach would enhance the power, ease, and efficacy of this editorial's message. With the hope of encouraging a few people in a modest way in schools ranging from kindergartens to universities to improve human understanding by using many channels of communication, this editorial is written. So, for the sake of better communication, let us say it with words and flowers and diamonds and anything else at our disposal.

R.A.Fiordo
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