

Bracken Business Communications Clinic

STYLE

THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Communication truly is a process. It takes time and revision to express our thoughts clearly to others. Beginning work on a paper or presentation the night before it is due rarely results in success. Instead, break the communication task into manageable parts by using the following tips:

1. Understand your co-communicators.
 - a. Who will be reading your paper or listening to your presentation?
 - b. What information do they already have and what information do they need?
 - c. What might their attitude be toward the information you plan to provide?
2. Think about research.
 - a. What information do you need to support your key points?
 - b. Where can you find this information?
 - c. How will you evaluate sources of information for credibility?
3. Brainstorm ideas.
 - a. Remember **PEAS**? This critical thinking framework encourages you to identify a **P**roblem, gather **E**vidence in the form of relevant facts and data, **A**nalyze several possible solutions, and then determine the best **S**olution.
 - b. Use a variety of techniques, including clustering, mapping, and freewriting, to organize your ideas.
4. Create an outline.
 - a. Start by identifying your thesis/claim/main idea. What is your purpose for communicating? Of what do you hope to convince your co-communicators?
 - b. Then, identify key points you will use to support your thesis, in addition to the evidence you will need to support each key point.
5. Write a first draft.
6. If writing, **REVISE!** If presenting, **PRACTICE!**
 - a. Do others understand your meaning?
 - b. Is your work error-free?

Crafting your paper or presentation will be much easier after you take the time to develop your ideas. Once you have a first draft, be sure to have others look at it and provide feedback. BBCC coaches are an excellent resource during the revision process. Remember, successful communication only occurs when all parties reach **SHARED MEANING**.