Preface

I AM VERY PLEASED that you have chosen to read this book! My first course in small groups was as an undergraduate student some years ago. I can honestly say that the subject has even more fascination for me now than it did then. I believe that if you learn more about teams and small groups, you will enrich your life and improve your chances of success in your chosen career. You can hardly read a newspaper or a magazine today without encountering an article about the increasing use of teams in our society. Whether in families, public schools, hospitals, universities, businesses, or government, it seems that everybody is discovering the value of small group activities. An increasing number of teams are now operating online as virtual teams. It certainly appears that the information contained in this book could be some of the most useful of any that you will encounter in your college career and for the rest of your life.

This book explores the myriad ways in which groups and teams can be used to help achieve successful results. Intended as a primary text for courses in group communication, this book is also used as a text in management, psychology, nursing, and education courses. This eighth edition represents a substantial and dramatic revision.

New to this Edition

While the systems model of small group interaction has been retained as the book's organizing framework, numerous other parts of the book have been changed. A new Chapter 10, "Observing Group Process," presents eleven new instruments for observing and analyzing groups. Five chapters have new chapter-opening case studies (Chapters 1, 2, 6, 7 and 8). Chapter 1 has a case on United Airlines flight 93 entitled, "Let's Roll." Chapter 2 has "The Departmental E-Mail." Chapter 6 has "General Motors." Chapter 7 has "Conflict in the Shipping Department." Chapter 8 has "North West Aerospace." And Chapter 10 has "Fishbowl Exercises." In addition, two of the chapters have new readings. Chapter 2 has a selection by Arizona Senator John McCain about the critical importance of communication as a prisoner of war in the "Hanoi Hilton." Chapter 3 has a new selection by Teri Gamble and Michael Gamble on "The Gender Communication Connection." Chapter 10 has two new reading

selections—first, "What Makes a Good Team Member?" by Frank LaFasto and Carl Larson, and second, "Measurement in Group Dynamics," by Donelson Forsyth.

Chapter 1 has a new section on "How to Use Case Studies." Chapter 2 has a new section on "Emotional Intelligence." Chapter 3 has a new section on "Diversity: Groups in Context." Chapter 4 has a new "Practical Tips" box on "How to Use Video Conferencing." Chapter 6 has a new section, "Six Thinking Hats," based on Edward DeBono's decision-making theory of the same name. Finally, new material has been added from over 65 sources, the vast majority of which have been published since the seventh edition of this book appeared in 2001. There are also a number of new World Wide Web resources added throughout the book.

Distinctions of *A Systems Approach to Small Group Interaction,* Eighth Edition

This book's format—text, with student experiential exercises and selected readings—is unique among the small group texts available. Each chapter begins with a brief chapter preview, followed by a glossary of terms used in that chapter. Next is an opening case study designed to stimulate student class discussions. The case study is followed by the chapter text material. Following each chapter are several experiential exercises designed to offer opportunities to practice the small group interactions discussed in the chapter. Finally, each chapter ends with two reading selections chosen for their direct relevance to the subjects discussed in that chapter. The readings are intended to offer further depth or to illustrate applications of the chapter's concepts. Finally, each chapter now has one or more new sections labeled "Practical Tips," which are designed to help readers see the practical applications of the text material.

Plan of the Book, Including New Features

Chapter 1 addresses the basic question, What is small group interaction? It presents key definitions and offers a "systems approach" conceptual model that serves as the organizing framework for the remainder of the book. New in Chapter 1 in this edition are:

- The opening case study, entitled "Let's Roll," that describes how a group of strangers formed a team to overtake four hijackers and thwart their attempt to crash their jet into the White House on September 11, 2001.
- A new section on How to Use Case Studies.
- A website that allows you to learn more about the identity of the group members on United Airlines flight 93.
- New research findings on the financial impact of empowerment on team and organizational effectiveness.
- The 2002 movie "Blackhawk Down" as a case example of how to use the Systems Model to analyze group dynamics.

- New information on the World Wide Web and how it illustrates some of the concepts of the systems approach.

Chapter 2, "Communication Processes," deals with the unique aspects of communication in the small group setting. It covers language behavior, self-disclosure, and interaction roles. New in Chapter 2 in this edition are:

- A new chapter opening case study of an actual e-mail intended to influence group members to attend two departmental meetings.
- Research findings on the importance of emotional intelligence and its overlap with communication comptencies.
- A website about famous people and their voices such as Fran Drescher of "The Nanny."
- New research examples from attorney Ann Coulter (on the right) and James Carville and Paul Begala (on the left) of unintentional communication among reporters and its impact on receivers' attitudes.
- New material on the topics of defensive and supportive communication climates.
- New extensive research by LaFasto and Larson on the most effective ways to communicate in groups.
- A new reading selection by Arizona Senator John McCain on the vital importance of communication as a prisoner of war.
- A website with many ideas about how to improve listening.

Chapter 3, "Relevant Background Factors," discusses six characteristics of individual group members that will influence the group's functioning. They are personality, gender, age, health, attitudes, and values. New in Chapter 3 in this edition are:

- A new section entitled, "Diversity: Groups in Context," explores some of the richness of working in groups made up of people from diverse backgrounds.
- Recent research by Bennis and Thomas as well as Goleman on "neoteny," or perpetual youth and enthusiasm as a factor in people's successful interactions with others.
- New research findings from Gamble and Gamble on communication differences between genders.
- A new example of actor Kirk Douglas describing his health issues and how they affected his speech.
- Research findings on the effects of diversity on improving group creativity.
- New information on the use of the Internet (e-havior) on group decision making.
- Examples of different group functions that are facilitated by the use of Groupware or Electronic Meeting Systems.
- Discussion of an online stress management site called www.MasteringStress.com.
- A new reading selection that discusses the relationship between gender and communication behaviors.

Chapter 4, "Group Circumstances and Structure," discusses the group's physical environment, the group's size and structure, and different types of groups. New in this edition are:

- A new Practical Tips box on when to use video conferencing.

Chapter 5, "Leadership and Social Influence Processes," discusses status, power, leadership, group norms, and conformity pressures. New in this edition are:

- New material on the importance of the context in determining a leader's effectiveness.
- New research findings on the contagiousness of the leader's behavior.
- Research findings on the effect of group norms on group member behaviors in different cultures, particularly Chinese culture.
- New research findings from The Leadership Trust Foundation that 73 percent of CEOs were fired for lack of leadership skills, including emotional intelligence, teamwork and teambuilding, and facilitation skills.
- New material on Yukl's hierarchical taxonomy of leadership behaviors.
- A major summary of leadership research from 1987–2002 on what characteristics people say they want in their leaders.
- Research findings on leadership as the single most important factor for team success.

Chapter 6, "Decision-Making Processes," examines the various methods for organizing group problem solving. New in this edition are:

- A case study on some of the decisions made by General Motors (for example not to offer the mini-van initially) and the results to the giant automaker.
- New creativity concepts such as "vu ja de" (Déjà vu backwards) and retrograde inversion (turning ideas upside down and backwards).
- A new section on DeBono's "Six Thinking Hats" method of decision making.
- An extensive listing of World Wide Web resources for Groupware (group software).

Chapter 7, "Conflict Management," examines the sources, types, and desirability or undesirability of conflict. It also offers ideas on resolving conflict. New in this chapter are:

- A new chapter opening case study entitled, "Conflict in the Shipping Department."
- The application of game theory, whose founder, John Nash, was the subject of the 2002 movie "A Beautiful Mind."

- More practical tips from Cloke and Goldsmith on how to more effectively manage conflict.
- Extensive new practical guidelines for managing conflict.

Chapter 8, "Consequences," is devoted to the outcomes of group activity. It covers solutions to problems, changes in interpersonal relations, improving information flow, increased risk taking, interpersonal growth, and organizational change. New in this edition are:

- A new chapter opening case entitled "North West Aerospace." This is a real company facing these major problems.
- New research material from John Kotter at Harvard Business School on the methods to achieve organizational change by appealing to people's hearts.
- A specific example of leading with the heart from Duke basketball "Coach K" (Coach Krzyzewski).
- A new summary of over 4,000 studies conducted by Rogers on the types of responses to change
- Research findings on organizational change.
- Practical tips for using teams to create organizational change.

Chapter 9, "Small Group Presentations to an Audience," offers suggestions for preparing an oral presentation and also discusses three typical formats for group presentations, the panel discussion, the symposium, and the forum discussion.

Chapter 10, "Observing Group Process," is entirely new. It is designed to help you get more out of your group experiences and to help you learn how to better understand group behavior.

Resources for Instructors and Students

A Systems Approach to Small Group Interaction CD-ROM that accompanies the text contains learning tools to help students comprehend course concepts. These tools are integrated with the text through the use of CD icons in the text margins:

Chapter Self-Quizzes allow students to assess their understanding of chapter concepts and get feedback on why an answer is right or wrong.

Practical Tips provide the practical applications of the chapter concepts in an audio format.

Business Documents Templates provide forms for resumes, cover letters, and memos.

Animations provide step-by-step explanations of communication models and exercises presented in the textbook.

Videos dramatize key group communication concepts.

Powerpoint Tutorial presents the basic steps to create and use Powerpoint effectively in a presentation.

Instructor's Resource CD contains the Instructor's Manual, the Test Bank, and PowerPoint slides.

The Online Learning Center, a text specific website at www.mhhe.com/tubbs8, provides instructors with PowerPoint slides, and downloadable supplements and provides students with additional learning tools. Icons in the text direct students to the website's self quizzes, animations, flashcards, and crossword puzzles.

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