

---

# ***ETHOS* and Manager's Credibility: Lessons From the Classroom**

William A. Haskins  
Department of Speech Communication  
McKendree College

## **Abstract**

*This article explores the topic of ethos within the contexts of education and management. Major dimensions of ethos are identified and discussed. Finally, lessons are offered from classroom teaching that may help managers to be perceived as more effective and credible communicators.*

Does the following example sound familiar?

Ted is the manager of a small retail store. He worked at the store for five years and the retail business for ten years. He clearly knows his business; other employees respect his knowledge of the retail industry, but he has a problem managing. Ted likes to tell people what to do; he finds it easier to simply issue orders rather than to discuss issues or seek suggestions to problems. Ted believes that he knows best and frequently reminds his subordinates of that belief. As a result, Ted's staff is plagued with high turnover and low morale. Ted blames these problems on their lack of motivation to do well and their general lack of loyalty to the store. In Ted's mind, he is doing everything right and his workers are doing everything wrong.

This brief scenario suggests a number of problems that seem to dominate Ted's communication style as a manager. One in particular appears to weaken his role as an effective manager: *ethos*. This ancient Greek concept lies at the core of how people perceive our character and their beliefs in our interactions with them. In Ted's case, his workers believed that he was knowledgeable in retail, but they seemed to have had serious doubts about his abilities to manage effectively, to trust his knowledge or experiences for improving their effectiveness or morale as workers. Stated differently, their perception of Ted's ethos (or credibility, in contemporary language) as a manager suggests that he

lacked their trust to lead them in ways that benefited the store in general and themselves in particular.

Educators know the importance of their *ethos* (credibility) in their pedagogy and teaching style in the classroom, as well as its (*ethos*) relationship to (Anderson, 1979; Beebe, 1974; Gage, 1994; Kearney, Plax, Richmond, & McCroskey, 1985; McCroskey & Richmond, 1983; Plax & Kearney, 1992). Many teachers understand the potential effects that credibility can have in the classroom, and realize the perception of their credibility comes from the students they interact with on a daily basis. What lessons, therefore, can educators and managers share? How can such lessons help managers improve their *ethos* with their staff or other organizational representatives? This is not to suggest that managers are not using some of the lessons addressed in this article. Rather, this article explores the concept of *ethos* within the contexts of education and management. Next, this paper identifies major dimensions associated with *ethos*. Finally, lessons are offered from classroom teaching for purposes of enhancing the perception of a manager's credibility. Such lessons may help managers not only improve their effectiveness to lead but also their abilities to communicate more effectively and ethically with others. Clearly, some managers may not be perceived as effective communicators. Yet they may be perceived as being highly ethical. This article's intent, however, focuses on helping managers be perceived as effective and credible communicators.

## Definition of *Ethos*

Ancient Greek scholars realized the importance of the concept *ethos* in persuasion. The famous Greek philosopher and teacher Aristotle studied and taught this concept. In his work *The Rhetoric*, he identified *ethos* as:

...the character [*ethos*] of the speaker is a cause of persuasion when the speech is so uttered as to make him worthy of belief, for as a rule we trust men of probity more, and more quickly, about things in general, while on points outside the realm of exact knowledge, where opinion is divided, we trust them absolutely (Aristotle, 1960: p. 9).

And more, he suggested that the speaker's "character [*ethos*] is the most potent of all the means of persuasion" (Aristotle, 1960: p. 9). Aristotle believed a person's *ethos* not only affected how other people perceived the speaker but if they would trust the speaker and his or her message. Contemporary communication scholars discuss *ethos* as the perception of credibility a person has towards another person or object (Booth-Butterfield & Gutowski, 1993; Burgoon, Birk & Pfau, 1990; Hamilton, 1998; Johnson & Coolen, 1995).

This article defines *ethos* as *the perceived degree of credibility that a person believes exists in another person's character*. Within the context of managerial communication, then, listeners' trust of managers may rest largely in their views of managers' *ethos*. For managers, their ability to communicate effectively with subordinates will undoubtedly be influenced by subordinates' perceptions of their managers' credibility.

## Dimension of *Ethos*

*Ethos*, or credibility in contemporary language, received significant attention and examination in the fields of communication and psychology. Factors that appear as salient dimensions of *ethos* are trust, character, competence, and dynamism (Aristotle, 1960; McCroskey & Young, 1981). A more recent factor emerging in the classroom affecting a teacher's influence and credibility focuses upon immediate behavior, as explored by researchers such as Richmond, Gorham, and McCroskey (1987).

The dimension of trust appears in many communication relationships between friends, family members, doctors and patients, teachers and students, etc., that occur daily. Clearly, similar relations in business, such as those between a manager and a subordinate, rely heavily upon the dimension of trust. Verderber and Verderber define trust as "placing confidence in the other" (Verderber & Verderber, 1995: p. 43). Managers face this prospect routinely when workers seek their counsel or assessment concerning any number of factors where they must "place confidence" in their managers' abilities to lead.

Character is a significant dimension of *ethos*. Both ancient and contemporary scholars recognized the importance of a person possessing good character when endeavoring to display credibility

(Aristotle, 1960; Foss, Foss, & Trapp, 1985; Ryan, 1992). The Roman scholar, Cicero, addresses this point in a work that later scholars attributed to him called *Ad Herennium*. He identifies the areas of right and praise worthy as significant areas of one's character. He further divides right in to the subheadings of wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance (Caplan, 1964: p. 163). Praiseworthy, Cicero suggests, is what "produces a honourable (sic) remembrance, at the time of the event and afterwards" (Caplan, 1964: p.169). In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle argues that the speaker's character may be "the most potent of all the means of persuasion" (Aristotle, 1960: p. 9). Thus, the character of people may influence their listeners to perceive them as people of good will. Listeners may believe that what is being said is not only truthful but for their benefit. Managers who fail to possess good character invite disaster with their workers. They may find it difficult, if not impossible, to have others perceive them as acting honorably, with wisdom and courage when making important decisions.

The next dimension of *ethos* discussed is competence. But competence involves more than simply being knowledgeable. It entails a perception that others have of us concerning our degree of knowledge on topics, our ability to command such knowledge, and our ability to communicate this knowledge clearly. Managers are frequently evaluated and tested by others, concerning, for instance, their knowledge on correct procedures, assignments, evaluations of subordinates, or goals and objectives of the organizations. Managers' responses to these and other topics help to influence subordinates' perceptions of their managers' levels of competence.

A third dimension of *ethos* focuses on dynamism. Simply put, this "is the degree to which the audience admires and identifies with the source's attractiveness, power or forcefulness, and energy" (Larson, 1992: p. 226). This dimension correlates strongly to a person's level of charisma. Certain managers, for example, may exhibit a high level of energy in their communication styles; they may display "a flair for the dramatic" that moves and excites listeners. Dynamism, however, does not necessarily mean that one must always display a high level of energy. As Larson explains: "Dynamic speakers don't necessarily move about or wave their arms to give off dynamism cues. They just seem to take up a lot of psychological space. They enter a room and people expect them to be in charge" (Larson, 1992: p. 226). Others may view such people also as dynamic because they have high moral character—meaning others can trust their words and actions. Managers who are

viewed as dynamic may possess a charismatic personality but this does not necessarily need to be the case. That is, others may perceive them as possessing strong character, that is being a person who others can trust, and, as a result, having a sense of dynamism about them in their mode of leadership.

The last dimension of *ethos* in this analysis involves a manager's immediate behavior. Utilizing some of the traits of dynamism, such as physical movement, eye contact, etc., creates immediate behavior when a manager uses a more direct style of communicating. That is, a manager displays behavior, which can reduce physical distance or psychological distance or both between himself or herself and another person. Kelly and Gorham describe high immediate teachers as "teachers . . . sitting on the edge of the chair, leaning forward placing nothing between himself and the subject, and utilizing head nods" (Kelly & Gorham, 1988: p. 203). Richmond, Gorham, and McCroskey further suggest that such behavior may also include "[v]ocal expressiveness, smiling at the class, and having a relaxed body position" (Richmond, Gorham, & McCroskey, 1987: pp. 586-587). These three behaviors appear to be the "most important" (Richmond, Gorham & McCroskey, 1987: p. 587) for predicting student learning in the classroom. This type of behavior may help teachers appear more engaging and competent to their students. Additionally, interest levels of students may also increase (Chory & McCroskey, 1999). As a result, a stronger sense of trust may also result emerge between teachers who use this style and their students. Clearly, these dimensions in a classroom influence a teacher's *ethos*. Managers may find similar factors at work with others in their daily organizational communication patterns.

### **Lessons From The Classroom For Developing *Ethos* Through Managerial Communication**

A communicator's *ethos* does not occur in isolation of other important factors occurring in the environment. This is particularly true with a classroom or work environment. Factors such as "timing, context, content, and . . . ability," (Nussbaum, 1992: p. 179) can quickly affect teachers' or managers' *ethos* in ways not predicted and, thus, mitigate their abilities to influence their listeners. With this in mind, the process of classroom management can teach critical lessons that may prove instructive for managers who wish to enhance their *ethos*. The first dimension examined focuses on trust. Teachers realize the

value of trust in the classroom. Without it, a minimum of learning will most likely occur. Similarly, managers realize the value of trust with their workers. For instance trust needs to exist if managers wish to become more subordinate-centered. Richmond and McCroskey (1979) found that employee satisfaction increased when this type of managerial communication style existed. Richmond found similar results with samples of teachers.

Suggestions for improving trust may occur by practicing the following lessons:

1. Try to adjust messages to workers. Always be sincere and honest in the presentation of information (Lucas, 2001)
2. Don't be afraid to identify any weaknesses in information (e.g., containing only partial information), such behavior can help to underscore the honesty of the speaker.
3. Identify references in the message the workers trust (Haskins & Staudacher, 1987).
4. Show the soundness of key positions on issues that may help to reinforce trust with workers.
5. Build trust by showing it. Place confidence in workers to share in the process. Research suggests that the "consult" approach in management produces a significant amount of satisfaction with employees (Sadler, 1970).

Managers, like teachers, need to "tailor-make" messages, which allow for greater understanding and trust. This needs to be done in ways that convey sincerity and honesty. For example, managers should not be afraid to say: "I don't know" when they lack particular information asked by a worker. Managers may wish to offer an "educated guess" or a response that suggests their willingness to seek out the missing information. Such responses can further enhance their sincerity and honesty in the eyes of the workers. Whenever possible, managers need to point out the strengths that exist in their messages and sources and why they exist. They may wish to invite workers to engage in open and honest dialogues on these messages. Workers can learn from these types of exchanges, as well as view their managers as people whom they can trust.

The dimension of character is central to building a strong and honest relationship with any individual or group of people. The wisdom

one possesses and the courage to act upon it for the benefit of others marks this person as one whom they can trust and respect, as a person who does not waiver on significant matters, such as right or wrong, good or evil. We commonly assume people of character make decisions with temperance after weighing the ideas carefully and after fully exploring the arguments and issues. This exists because the character of the person demands that he or she do what is right and good for himself or herself, as well as for other people. This dimension often separates persons who “talk a good game” from those “who act upon their good thoughts and deeds.” This is the teacher who patiently works with students to help them gain the “vision” necessary to see connections between theories and principles who gives up his or her time without complaining to assist students achieve their goals understands the importance of uniting “words and deeds,” and who achieves the perceptions that the teacher is a person of character. Suggestions for building that perception of character include:

1. Display justice in your dealings with employees. Do this by exhibiting “due process,” for example, when settling conflict. Communicate a just decision that is grounded in fairness and through examination of the arguments (Rieke & Sillars, 1991).
2. Exhibit wisdom by sharing your thoughts and ideas in a manner which does not demand attention but earns it by the way it's presented and the importance of the content shared.
3. Show courage (Caplan, 1964). Speak your mind but do it in a way that does not build walls between people. Defend your views and those of others who may find themselves in the minority position but whose ideas merit listening, if for no other reason, than they are given by fellow human beings.
4. “Think before you speak” is sage advice for any person, especially one in a managerial role. Temperance, as Cicero suggested, allows one the time to weigh action and potential consequences which may result. Thinking wisely under pressure, for instance, may prevent poor decisions from “ruling the day” and ruining a manager's credibility with his or her workers (Caplan, 1964).
5. Demonstrate good will by listening and, when possible, acting upon recommendations which may

help to improve morale and productivity (Rieke & Sillars, 1997).

Managers of good character motivate others by example. Workers respect them for both their deeds and words because they believe people of good character are trustworthy. Workers seek them out because they view them as people who they can have confidence and whose opinions matter. Workers believe that such managers act in ways that truly attempt to improve the organization's culture and the lives of those who work in it. In brief, their character defines them as people whose actions are based upon high ethical standards, which dictate how they behave towards themselves and others in the workplace.

Being perceived as a competent communicator by workers holds the potential for significant advantages (e.g., higher morale, higher productivity, higher cognitive abilities and affective learning, greater sense of caring) for managers. Educators have experienced similar advantages in the classroom (McCroskey & Young, 1981; McCroskey, 1992). Suggestions for building competency are:

1. Show control of the subject by demonstrating command of important areas such as, key issues, sources, evidence, arguments or differing viewpoints on the subject (Haskins & Staudacher, 1987).
2. Develop plans that reflect that the speaker is competent because of his or her thoroughness and organization. But treat a plan as a starting point, not the finished product. This may invite suggestions and criticisms—some of which may prove helpful to the success of the plan (Pearson & Nelson, 2000).
3. Be organized in the presentation of the subject to the listeners. Use organizational patterns such as chronological, topical, or problem-solution (Lucas, 2001).
4. Present messages with minimal errors (e.g., enunciation of sounds, grammatical mistakes), which can produce a less powerful speaking style (Hostman, 1989).

5. When possible, explain personal experiences that can provide greater insights for workers on the subject. Attempt to avoid sounding cocky or arrogant when presenting this information.

Managers, like teachers, want their listeners to view them as being competent. Preparation is the key for establishing an organized, well-developed message. Teachers have tried to practice this behavior for years by producing such artifacts as lesson plans or assessment tools to help them present organized, effective messages. No one ever said that presenting such messages had to be boring! Managers should practice presenting such messages to allow for greater command of the subject and for a sense of control of the delivery. Managers may wish to do a “dry-run” of the presentation before a small group of listeners. Their feedback may prove instructive for helping managers gain greater command of the subject (which may improve listeners’ perceptions of managers’ levels of competency and trustworthiness), as well as help managers make their messages more “tailor-made” for the listeners.

Dynamism is another dimension of *ethos* to consider when communicating with listeners. In the classroom, teachers need to appear in control of themselves and their environments and to appear energized by the experience of teaching. Similarly, managers need to appear in control of the situation and energized by it. If they appear bored or disconnected from the work environment, they invite communication disaster. And worse, consequences from this type of communication style can possibly lead to a weakening of morale and productivity in subordinates who view their work environment negatively. Some thoughts for enhancing managers’ dynamism in the workplace include:

1. Change physical movements (e.g., gestures, meaningful movement, facial expressions, eye contact) to complement the message and to avoid a monotonous communication style (Haskins & Staudacher, 1987).
2. Vary vocal characteristics (e.g., rate, pitch, tonal qualities, inflection) periodically to add to the

- variety of feelings, expressions, or humor that need to be displayed (Lucas, 2001).
3. Use a powerful style of speaking that uses few verbal or vocal hesitations, such as "OK," "you know," "um," or "ah" (Hostman, 1989).
  4. Vary use of audio or visual aids, such as charts, graphs, PowerPoint, or tapes in the presentation of messages. That is, show dynamism in the manner and variety of ways messages can be communicated (Schmidt & Gardner, 1995).

Managers need to allow both the visual and vocal aspects of their communication to enrich their messages and *ethos*. There is no such thing as a natural born "boring speaker." One has to work hard at sounding or appearing boring. Allow flexibility to be a guiding principle for becoming a dynamic individual who is also perceived as a person of good character. Managers may wish to videotape practice sessions. They can then analyze them (possibly with the assistance of a friend or consultant) and look for ways to make their messages clearer and their deliveries more dynamic. Educators have realized the importance in displaying a dynamic communication style. Managers can clearly profit from a similar realization.

Immediacy of behavior suggests a style of communicating, which helps the communicator get closer physically or psychologically or both to the listener. Teachers who seek to enhance their credibility and, in turn, their good character and trustworthiness, may select a more direct or immediate style of communicating. Studies suggest that this approach tends to enhance more cognitive learning in class (Andersen, 1978; Christophel, 1990; Gorham, 1988), as well as improve interest of students in the class (Chory & McCroskey, 1999; Christophel, 1990; Gorham, Kelley & McCroskey, 1989). Managers may wish to seek a more immediate behavior style of communicating to improve retention of their messages, as well as enhance their *ethos* and satisfaction level of subordinates (Richmond & McCroskey, 1979). The following suggestions are recommended:

1. Make eye contact with listeners. Avoid the type of eye contact that may lead to disinterest (e.g., looking at only one side of the room, looking at the floor while speaking, looking disinterested (Andersen, 1978; Lucas, 2001).

2. Appear relaxed and attempt to smile when possible. A simple, but genuine smile can help listeners feel more connected to the conversation (Chory & McCroskey, 1999).
3. If appropriate, try to reduce distance when speaking to the listeners. This can be done by using nonverbal behaviors, such as moving around the room, establishing eye contact, and removing physical barriers (e.g., chairs, tables) that can create artificial distance between people (Chory & McCroskey, 1999).
4. Use verbal expressiveness (e.g., change in inflection, volume level) to help reduce possibly psychological distance with the listeners (Sanders & Wiseman, 1990).

Seek to develop immediate behavior with subordinates. Teachers are realizing the value of using immediate behavior in the classroom for increasing cognitive and affective learning (Gorham, 1988; Richmond, Gorham, & McCroskey, 1987). Managers who select this behavior may experience similar results, affecting workers' perceptions of their managers' credibility. Managers will need to seek a comfortable distance between themselves and their listeners. They will want to move comfortably and purposefully when establishing a more immediate style of communicating. Both their verbal and nonverbal communication behavior must underscore their desire to get "physically as well as psychologically" closer to their listeners. At times, it may be impossible to become physically closer (e.g., teleconference meeting) with their listeners. Nonetheless, managers can still employ communication behaviors (e.g., verbal expressiveness, facial expressions) that help to produce immediate behavior communication styles.

## Conclusion

With all people, managers need to consider their *ethos* in their interaction with their listeners. Credibility, or *ethos*, can significantly affect the outcome of communication with their listeners. Educators constantly seek ways to enhance their credibility with their students. They realize the values of being perceived as highly credible in the

classroom. Managers, too, know the values of being perceived by their listeners as credible communicators.

This article reviewed lessons that managers may wish to consider from educators on the topic of *ethos* and ways for improving it. As stated earlier, this is not to suggest that managers are not using many of the lessons presented in the article. Rather, the focus of the article was to explore the topic of *ethos*, highlight important dimensions of it, and recommend suggestions from lessons learned within an educational context that might prove instructive to managers in their daily interactions. Clearly, improving a manager's *ethos*, which may lead to a greater sense of trust between management and labor, may certainly be worth the effort.

## References

- Andersen, J. F. (1979). Teacher immediacy as a predictor of teaching effectiveness. *Communication Yearbook*, 3, 543-559.
- Andersen, J. F. (1978). *The relationship between teacher immediacy and teaching effectiveness*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, West Virginia University, Morgantown.
- Aristotle. (1960). *The rhetoric of Aristotle* (L. Cooper, Tran.). New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.
- Beebe, S. A. (1974). Eye contact: A nonverbal determinant of speaker credibility. *Speech Teacher*, 23, 247-254.
- Booth-Butterfield, S., & Gutowski, C. (1993). Message modality and source credibility can interact to affect argument process. *Communication Quarterly*, 41, 77-89.
- Burgoon, J., Birk, T., & Pfau, M. (1990). Nonverbal behaviors, persuasion, and credibility. *Human Communication Research*, 17, 140-169.
- Cicero. (1964). *Ad herennium* (H. Caplan, Tran.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Chory, R. M., & McCroskey, J. C. (1999). The relationship between teacher management communication style and affective learning. *Communication Quarterly*, 47, 1-11.

Christophel, D. M. (1990). The relationship among teacher immediacy behaviors, student motivation, and learning. *Communication Education*, 39, 323-340.

Foss, F. K, Foss, K. A., & Trapp, R. (eds.). (1985). *Contemporary perspectives on rhetoric*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Gage, N. L. (1994). The scientific status of research on teaching. *Education Theory*, 44, (4), 371-383.

Gorham, J. (1988). The relationship between verbal teacher immediacy and student learning. *Communication Education*, 37, 40-53.

Gorham, J., Kelley, D. H., & McCroskey, J. C. (1989). The affinity seeking of classroom teachers: A second perspective. *Communication Quarterly*, 37, 16-26.

Hamilton, M. A. (1998). Message variables that mediate and moderate the effect of equivocal language on source credibility. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 21, 109-143.

Haskins, W. A., & Staudacher, J. M. (1987). *Successful public speaking: A practical guide*. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman & Co.

Hostman, L. (1989). The evaluative consequences of hedges, hesitations, and intensifiers: Powerful and powerless speech styles. *Human Communication Research*, 15, 383-406.

Johnston, L., & Coolen, P. (1995). A dual processing approach to stereotype change. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 21, 660-673.

Kearney, P., Plax, T. G., Richmond, V. P., & McCroskey, J. C. (1985). Power in the classroom III: Teacher communication techniques and messages. *Communication Education*, 34, 19-28.

- Kelly, D. H., & Gorham, J. (1988). Effects of immediacy on recall information. *Communication Education*, 37, 198-207.
- Larson, C. U. (1992). *Persuasion: Reception and responsibility* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co.
- Lucas, S. E. (2001). *The art of public speaking* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- McCroskey, J. C. (1992). *An introduction to communication in the classroom*. Edina, MN: Burgess International Group, Inc.
- McCroskey, J. C., & Richmond, V. P. (1983). Power in the classroom I: Teacher and student perceptions. *Communication Education*, 32, 175-184.
- McCrosky, J., & Young, T. (1981). Ethos and credibility: The construct and its measurements after two decades. *Central States Speech Journal*, 32, 24-34.
- Nussbaum, J. F. (1992). Effective teacher behavior. *Communication Education*, 41, 167-180.
- Pearson, J. C., & Nelson, P. E. (2000). *An introduction to human communication: Understanding and sharing* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Plax, T. G., & Kearney, P. (1992). Teacher powers in the classroom: Defining and advancing a program of research. In V. P. Richmond & J. C. McCroskey, (Eds.). *Power in the classroom: Communication, control, and concern*, (pp. 67-84). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Richmond, V. P., Gorham, J. S., & McCrosky, J. (1987). The relationship between selected immediacy behaviors and cognitive learning. In M. McLaughlin (Ed.), *Communication Yearbook 10* (pp. 574-590). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Richmond, V. P. & McCroskey, J. C. (1979). Management communication style, tolerance for disagreement, and innovativeness as predictors of employee satisfaction: A comparison of single-factor, two-factor, multiple-factor approaches. In D. Nimmo (Ed.), *Communication Yearbook 3* (pp. 359-373). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.

Richmond, V. P., McCroskey, J. C., & Davis, L. M. (1982). Individual differences among employees, management communication style, and job satisfaction: Replication and extension. *Human Communication Research*, 8, 170-188.

Rieke, R. D., & Sillars, M. O. (1997). *Argumentation and critical decision making* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Longman.

Ryan, H. (1992). *Classical communication for the contemporary communicator*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co.

Sadler, P. J. (1970). Leadership, style, confidence in management, and job satisfaction. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 6, 3-19.

Sanders, J. A., & Wiseman, R. L. (1990). The effects of verbal and nonverbal teacher immediacy on perceived cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning in the multicultural classroom. *Communication Education*, 39, 341-353.

Schmidt, W. V., & Gardner, G. H. (1995). *Business and professional communication: Managing information in an information age*. Cincinnati, OH: Southwestern College Publishing.

Verderber, R. F., & Verderber, H. S. (1995). *Inter-act: Using interpersonal communication skills* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.).

#### *About the Author*

Dr. William A. Haskins is a professor of speech communication at McKendree College in Lebanon, Illinois. He has published articles on communication in journals of communication, law, education, religion, and engineering. His research interests include intercultural communication, freedom of speech and rhetoric. The author would like to thank the editorial staff at GVER and the reviewers for their helpful comments in the production of this paper.

William A. Haskins  
McKendree College  
701 College Road  
Lebanon, IL 62254  
whaskins@mckendree.edu