# Communication Models and the CMAPP Analysis

*I*f you want to find out the effect on Vancouver of a two-foot rise in sea level, you wouldn't try to melt the polar ice cap and then visit Canada. You'd try to find a computer model that would predict the likely consequences. Similarly, when we study technical communication, we use a model.

Transactional Communication Models

Various communication models have been developed over the years. **Figure 2.1** on the next page shows a simple **transactional model,** so called to reflect the two-way nature of communication. The model, which in principle works for all types of oral and written communication, has the following characteristics:

1. The originator of the communication (the **sender**) conveys (transmits) it to someone else (the **receiver**).
2. The **transmission vehicle** might be face-to-face speech, correspondence, telephone, fax, or e-mail.
3. The receiver's reaction (e.g., body language, verbal or written response)—the **feedback**—can have an effect on the sender, who may then modify any further communication accordingly.

FIGURE 2.1   A Simple Transactional Model

Feedback

Sender   Receiver
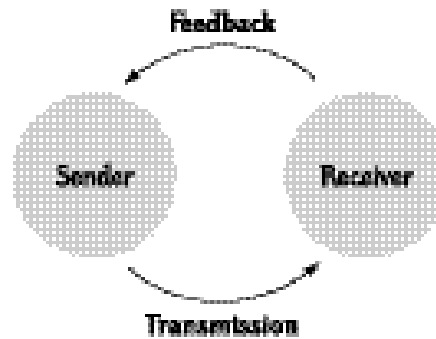
Transmission

As an example, think of a face-to-face conversation with a friend. As sender, you mention what you think is a funny comment made by another student named Maria. (Note that the basic transmission vehicle here is the sound waves that carry your voice.) As you refer to her, you see your friend's (the receiver's) face begin to cloud over, and you remember that your friend and Maria strongly dislike each other. This feedback makes you decide to start talking about something else. The model thus demonstrates an ongoing transaction between sender and receiver conditioned by both the type and effectiveness of the transmission and the impact of the feedback.

The more complex transactional model that appears in **Figure 2.2** on the next page has the following characteristics:

◆   The sender has an idea, which he or she must encode—that is, put into appropriate language.
◆   The sender uses a transmission vehicle (as in the previous model).
◆   When the receiver decodes, the transmission is susceptible to misunderstanding of structure and differing interpretation of words.
◆   Both sender and receiver may respond to feedback.
◆   Real-world communication is always subject to **interference,** which can be *external* and/or *internal.*

Traffic noise, people coughing nearby, a garbled e-mail file, and smudges on paper are some examples of external interference. Examples of internal interference include the receiver's having a migraine or having a strong bias against either the sender or the topic. Interference can impede the encoding, the transmission, the decoding, and/or the feedback, thereby greatly reducing the effectiveness of communication.

Here is a simple example. In an exam, you have to answer a complex question. While you have a clear idea of what you mean, you have to find the right way to express it. You have to **encode** your idea in language that is logical, clear, and

> **FIGURE 2.2**   An Interference Transactional Model
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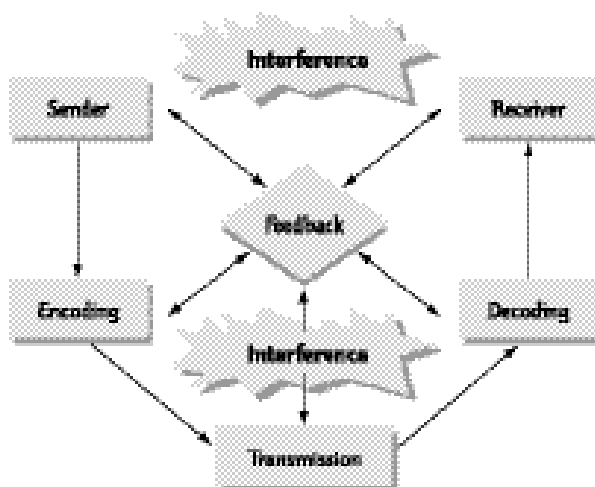
concise. External interference while you are encoding might include the coughing of other students and the hum of the fluorescent lighting. Internal interference could come from your nervousness during the exam or from your fatigue after having been up all night studying.

The transmission vehicle is the exam paper—the composition you are writing. An example of external interference at this stage would be your pen leaving an ink blot or a smudge.

Your instructor—the receiver—will have to **decode** what you have written—that is, interpret your words and assess your knowledge. During this process, there might be external interference from other people's conversations or even from the difficulty of deciphering your rushed handwriting. Internal interference might stem from your instructor's irritation at the poor quality of the papers already marked.

In this example, feedback cannot be immediate: You will receive it only when you get your exam back. When that happens, your dissatisfaction with your mark might interfere with your understanding of your instructor's comments. Finally, the late arrival of several students might annoy your instructor and thus interfere with the delivery of his or her subsequent feedback.
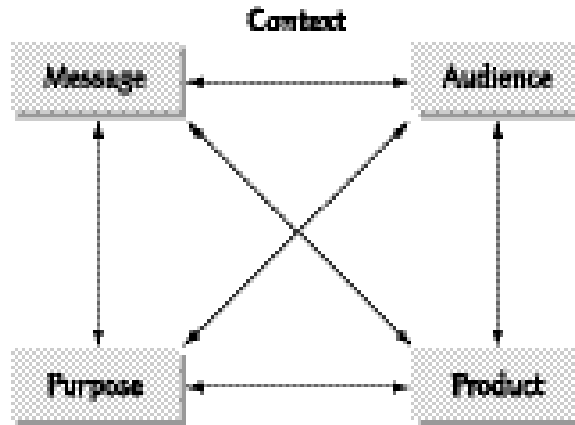
The CMAPP Communication Model

The simple and interference transactional models appear to work for most types of communication. By contrast, the model shown in **Figure 2.3** on the next page is designed specifically for technical communication. The **CMAPP model,** which does not include the terms *sender, transmission,* or *receiver,* reflects the deceptively simple nature of real-world technical communication.

Tech Link

About.com's Technical Writing Guide features a wide variety of articles, links, and resources for writers. Visit *http://techwriting.about.com/ careers/techwriting*

FIGURE 2.3   The CMAPP Model

The CMAPP approach incorporates the following ideas:

♦   Situations (the **context**) in which people find themselves affect their communication.
♦   What people say (the **message**) is affected by the person or group with whom they are communicating (the **audience**).
♦   What people communicate is affected by their reason for communicating and their expectations (the **purpose**).
♦   The physical form of the communication (the **product**) affects the way in which the communication is formulated and received.
♦   All these ideas affect each other all the time.
♦   The first step in creating effective technical communication is conducting a CMAPP analysis.

Definitions

Following are explanations of the CMAPP model's terminology.

♦   **Context** refers to the surrounding situation. It may include (but is not limited to):
    ♦   Personal relationships.
    ♦   Time and place.
    ♦   All circumstances that may influence the people and the communication involved.
    ♦   External and internal interference that might have an impact.
♦   **Message** refers to the content of the communication, and might include:
    ♦   An overview of the situation.
    ♦   The most significant facts, issues, and questions.

- ◆ Relevant details.
- ◆ A primary message (the main thing you wish to communicate) and, potentially, a secondary message (ideas that might appear in parentheses).
- ◆ **Audience** is similar to the receiver in the transactional models. Here, however, it can include:
  - ◆ A primary audience, which refers to the person or people you want to reach first.
  - ◆ A secondary (and perhaps even a tertiary) audience, which refers to other people you wish to reach as well (e.g., your boss's boss, the manager who receives a copy of all interoffice memos, your facilitator when you are delivering a presentation to your class).
- ◆ **Purpose** refers to why you are communicating. The concept includes:
  - ◆ Your motive or motives—potentially, both overt and covert—for communicating.
  - ◆ The possibility of a secondary (and perhaps even a tertiary) purpose.
  - ◆ The reaction that you expect from your audience.
  - ◆ The response you wish to elicit.
- ◆ **Product** is the "shape" of the communication, or the physical form it takes (e.g., a particular appearance on paper). The choice of product will affect and be affected by the context, message, audience, and purpose. Thus, the term would include (but not be limited to):
  - ◆ Memos.
  - ◆ Letters.
  - ◆ Reports.
  - ◆ Summaries.
  - ◆ Faxes.
  - ◆ E-mails.
  - ◆ Telephone conversations.
  - ◆ Face-to-face conversations.

Knowing Your Audience

Before beginning to write, you must know who your potential audience will be. Your potential audience affects everything you write—content (what should and should not be included), length (how long or short your work should be), and graphics (what diagrams, charts, pictures, and so on, are needed).

Here are five basic questions you should ask yourself before beginning to write. The answers will help determine what kind of writing you need to do.

1. *What is the reader's purpose and need in reading?* The reader may need to gather information, make a decision, or complete some action. The reader's purpose impacts the amount of information you share and the format in which you share it.

⊠ Tech Link

Austin Community College's Online Technical Writing Course features an excellent discussion of audience analysis, *www.io.com/~hcexres/ tcm1603/acchtml/ acctoc.html*

2. *What does the reader already know about the topic?* Your reader's level of experience tells you how to treat your topic. For example, if your audience is already knowledgeable about your subject, you can provide less background information and fewer illustrations.

3. *What is the reader's educational level?* Generally, a person who has completed higher levels of education will have a higher reading level. You must adjust the level of difficulty to the audience's ability to comprehend.

4. *What is the reader's attitude?* A reader's feelings toward a subject may be positive, negative, or neutral. How the reader feels will influence his or her reception of your material. This assessment may affect the order and timing of your message.

5. *What is the best format for the reader?* How best can you communicate your message? What form is expected and what will be most effective? The answer to this question will determine the form your writing takes. For example, you might choose an e-mail, a manual, a brochure, a memo, or a newsletter, depending on your reader's interests and needs.

Attitude

One common pitfall when adjusting to your audience is writing with an **I-attitude** rather than a **you-attitude.** A you-attitude focuses on the needs, interests, and concerns of the receiver. An I-attitude focuses on the sender. Consider the following examples:

I-Attitude	You-Attitude
I am pleased to inform you that your Tech Credit Card has been approved.	Welcome to the Tech family. Come in and use your Tech Credit Card soon.

Analysis Tips

To use a CMAPP analysis, ask yourself questions about the CMAPP components before you begin drafting your product. Make sure that you have adequately defined the particular context, the principal message, the primary audience, the overall purpose, and the appropriate product. Examine each of the elements closely. As you find one component affecting others, modify each accordingly until your product is ready for delivery.

There is no predefined set of questions you should ask yourself in your CMAPP analysis. The questions are determined by the interrelationship of context, message, audience, purpose, and product. Recall, however, that the specifics of your message should respond to what you think your audience will need and/or want to know.

The following Checklist features just some of the questions you might ask as you consider each CMAPP component.

Checklist

CMAPP Analysis

Context

✓ What is the underlying or surrounding situation?

✓ What are the physical conditions (lighting, noise, and so on)?

✓ How will the context affect how my audience responds to me or my message?

✓ What is my relationship with my audience?

✓ What other relationships involved might have an impact?

Message

✓ What exactly am I trying to communicate?

✓ Is it a message worth communicating?

✓ Is my message self-contained, or is it the initial, middle, or final segment of a longer communication?

✓ Have I included all necessary and excluded all unnecessary information?

✓ Have I provided the specifics that my audience will need and/or want?

✓ Do I have more than one message (i.e., one or more secondary messages)?

✓ If I have more than one message, have I arranged them in an order that is appropriate for this context, audience, and purpose?

✓ Am I the best person to send this message, or should the message come from someone else?

Audience

✓ Who should receive my communication?

✓ Who will receive it?

✓ What does my audience know already?

✓ What does my audience need to know?

✓ What does my audience want to know?

✓ What assumptions have I made about my audience?

✓ How specialized (technical) is my audience?

✓ How will my audience benefit from my communication?

Purpose

✓ Why do I want to communicate?

✓ Why do I want to communicate at this particular time?

Purpose (continued)

✓   Why would my audience need or want this communication?

✓   What do I want to achieve?

✓   Am I trying to inform, persuade, instruct, or describe?

✓   Was my communication explicitly requested?

✓   Are there deadlines involved?

✓   Have I identified and dealt with them?

Product

✓   Should I be writing, phoning, or visiting?

✓   Have I chosen a product (e.g., letter, memo, report, presentation) that is appropriate for this context, audience, message, and purpose?

✓   Do the wording and format of my product reflect the image I want to present?

CMAPP in Action

Consider the following scenario. You receive an envelope that is supposed to contain a check and an explanatory note. The note is there; the check is not. What do you do? According to the CMAPP approach, you would conduct a brief analysis before you actually do anything. Here's an example:

- *Context.*   Were you expecting the check, or was it a surprise? Was it on time or overdue? Was it a refund from the IRS, a birthday gift, a student loan installment, payment for overtime work? Do you have a personal relationship with the person who was to send it? If you do, is that relationship a good or a bad one? If the note was signed by more than one person, how do you determine to whom you should direct your response?

- *Message.*   What specifically should you say? Are you providing everything your audience will need in order to understand and respond? Should you mention your annoyance? (Think of the context.) How much detail should you include? What kind of language should you use—simple or sophisticated?

- *Audience.*   Are you communicating with a single individual? a company? a large bureaucracy? Will that audience know who you are—or care? Do you have reason to believe your audience is competent to deal with the situation? Are you trying to communicate with the person who forgot to enclose the check or with that person's boss?

- *Purpose.*   Are you communicating simply to get your check as quickly as possible? to voice your irritation? to obtain an apology? Do you expect an immediate response? Do you want to maintain a good relationship with your audience, or do you not care?

◆ *Product.* Should you telephone? If so, would you be satisfied with voice mail? Would calling long-distance be acceptable to you? Should you—or can you—pay a visit instead? Would written communication be more effective? If so, should it be handwritten or word-processed? on personal or letterhead stationery? Which product is most likely to fulfill your purpose?

Interrelationships Among CMAPP Elements

Whereas most traditional models are linear in the sense that they progress from A to B to C (and then, for example, back to A), the CMAPP model is dynamic. In this dynamic, even the slightest change in one element has a ripple effect on all the others. In the missing check example, the CMAPP dynamic included the following interactions:

◆ Knowing more about your audience helped determine your context.
◆ That knowledge about context helped you identify the particular audience.
◆ Knowing your audience helped you identify and refine your purpose.
◆ As you refined your purpose, you got a better idea of the most appropriate product.
◆ Your conception of the product was also dependent on your audience, which in turn affected your message.

You may have noticed that CMAPP does not make explicit reference to a prime component of transactional models—feedback. The concept, however, is fundamental. Modifications to any one of context, message, audience, purpose, or product have an inevitable impact on the other elements, altering them over time. These shifts are, in effect, the manifestations of feedback. For example, your message affects your audience in a particular way, which alters the context, which has an impact on both your audience's reaction and your own response to that reaction. Technical communication, just like life, can get complicated.

Chapter Review . . . .

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In a simple transactional communication model, the sender transmits the message to the receiver via a transmission vehicle. The receiver's feedback can affect the sender and the sender's future communication. In a more complex transactional model, external and internal interference can affect several areas and thus reduce the effectiveness of the communication.

The CMAPP model is designed specifically for technical communication and consists of five components—context, message, audience, purpose, product— that are the basis for analyzing your communications. Context refers to the surrounding situation. Message refers to the content of the communication. Audience refers to the receiver of the message. Purpose is why you are communicating. Product is the physical form of the communication.

To use a CMAPP analysis, ask questions to help you define the particular context, the principal message, the primary audience, the overall purpose, and the appropriate product before you begin drafting your product. The five components are interrelated, so a change to one component can affect the other four components. Always keep in mind that the specifics of your message should respond to what you think your audience will need and/or want to know. Modify each element until your product is ready for delivery.

KEY TERMS

Audience	Message
CMAPP model	Product
Context	Purpose
Decode	Receiver
Encode	Sender
Feedback	Transactional model
I-attitude	Transmission vehicle
Interference	You-attitude

CRITICAL THINKING ACTIVITIES

1. Two different scenarios follow. In Scenario A, you tell a student at another institution about your financial situation this term. In Scenario B, you communicate this information to a loan officer at your bank. For each scenario, provide answers to the CMAPP questions that follow. Invent any necessary details.

Scenario A: Fellow Student

Context
1. What is your relationship with the student?
2. Why would the student be interested in your message?
3. What is the student's own financial situation?

Message
1. What specific information will the student need or want in order to respond as you would like?
2. What details should you provide?
3. Should you exclude any details? If so, what details and why?

Audience
1. Is the student female or male? How might this make a difference?
2. What might the student know already?
3. What would the student want to know?
4. What do you know about the student's financial situation?

Purpose
1. Why are you telling the student about your financial situation?
2. What kind of reaction do you expect?
3. What do you want the student to do with the information?

Product
1. What product do you intend to use?
2. Why have you chosen to use that product?

Scenario B: Loan Officer at Your Bank

Context
1. What is your relationship with the loan officer?
2. Why might the loan officer even be interested in your message?
3. What kind of reputation do students have in the banking community?
4. How long have you been dealing with this branch and/or this person?
5. How might your history with the bank affect how your message is received?

Message
1. What specific information and explanations will the loan officer want?
2. What information should you provide?
3. What information might you want to withhold?
4. Should you withhold this information? Why or why not?

Audience
1. What is the sex and age of the loan officer? How might these make a difference?
2. Is the loan officer the only audience?

3. If there is a secondary audience, who is it?
4. What would the loan officer know already?
5. What would the loan officer want or need to know?
6. Is anyone else likely to see or use the information you provide?

Purpose
1. Why are you telling the loan officer about your situation?
2. What do you want him or her to do with the information?
3. Do you have a secondary purpose? If so, what is it?
4. What might the loan officer's purpose be?
5. Is the loan officer's purpose of any relevance to your situation?

Product
1. What product do you intend to use?
2. Why have you chosen to use that product?

2. The computer system you purchased from Acme High-Tech Products has given you considerable trouble. Angry, you dash off a letter **(Figure 2.4** on the next page**)** to Acme's sales manager, R. B. Kim. You do not mail this letter. Instead, you wait until you are calm, then decide to construct a letter that adheres to the principles of good technical communication. The first step is to conduct a CMAPP analysis. For the purposes of this exercise, do not write the new letter but simply answer the following CMAPP questions:

Context
1. What has prompted you to write a new letter?
2. How would you describe the relationship between you and your audience?
3. What are you prepared to do if your letter fails to meet its intended objective?

Message
1. What are your main points?
2. If you have any secondary points, what are they?

Audience
1. Who is your audience?
2. If you have a secondary audience, who is it?
3. What do you think your primary audience knows?
4. What do you think that audience needs to know?
5. What do you think that audience wants to know?

Purpose
1. What is your purpose?
2. If you have a secondary purpose, what is it? (Hint: Think long term.)

Product

1. What product might you have chosen instead of a letter?
2. Why have you chosen to use a letter? (Hint: You might have more than one reason.)
3. What kind of tone will you use?
4. How technical should your letter be?

FIGURE 2.4   Letter to R. B. Kim

Last month we purchased a computer from you, sold to us by your Mr. Webley when he came to our home after our phone conversation two days earlier. We spoke with him for a couple of hours, gave him coffee, and eventually decided to buy the PB-2 "User-Friendly Package" that he showed us in the many pages of advertising material he had brought.

When the merchandise arrived two days later, the delivery person, who said he replaced Mr. Webley on Fridays, really didn't seem to know what he was doing. He kept referring to the manuals that came with the package, and he wore a continual worried look while trying to make little jokes about the complex technology we have in our lives now. Eventually he seemed to get it all working and left. By then it was 8 p.m., some three hours since he'd arrived.

The next morning I had some spreadsheets to do. As I told Mr. Webley before he suggested the PB-2 package, I've had quite a bit of experience with the old Lotus 1-2-3. So I bought a copy of Office from Acme, as part of the package, along with Quicken, Quake, Encarta, and Front Page.

Unfortunately, I had one system error after another (I think that's what they were), never did get my work finished, and, to top it off, found the printer—the Printomatic 554, also part of the package—wouldn't accept the commands I keyed.

No one was at the service number Mr. Webley provided when I called that afternoon—a Saturday—nor the next day. On Monday, someone answered but got quite rude when I told my story and demanded that Acme either arrange for real support for its customers or pick up its lousy equipment and give me my money back! After that call, I gave up trying to contact anyone and wrote this--on my typewriter, not on your shoddy computer!

I better hear from you in the next couple of days, or you'll be hearing from my lawyer, who's getting a copy of this letter too.

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3. Among RAI's products is the Minotaur, a popular luxury car manufactured by Global Vehicles. Having recently discovered a possible manufacturing defect in some Minotaur models, Global composed a notification (**Figure 2.5** on the next page) to deal with the problem. Based on your analysis of the notification, provide answers to the CMAPP questions that follow the figure.

[**FIGURE 2.5**   Global Notification]

A possible defect relating to the potential failure of a seal in the mounting of the left tie-rod-end assembly may exist in your vehicle. In the event of disconnection, this seal (configured as a supportive component to the front rack assembly) could result in at least partial loss of bilateral vehicle directional control, particularly during unusually significant intentional deceleration. In addition, your vehicle may require adjustment service to the front hub bearing where it comes into contact with the hub carrier beside the right caliper. Should this bearing be improperly aligned, unusually rapid acceleration during excessive directional change might result in a similar loss of bilateral vehicle directional control. In certain circumstances, either of these potential failures has the capability of causing unexpectedly severe vehicle handling. You are, therefore, advised to consider the benefits of contacting your reseller to arrange for relevant adjustment or replacement without personal expenditure on your part.

Context
   1. What relationship(s) might exist between Global and the audience(s)?
   2. How might the relationship(s) change as a result of the notification?
   3. What kind of reaction to its notification might Global expect?
   4. What impact might the situation have on RAI?

Message
   1. Is the information clear and concise? Give examples to justify your response.
   2. What do you think the primary audience needs and wants to know?
   3. What can you say about the language used in the notification?

Audience
   1. Who appears to be the audience for the notification?
   2. At what other audience or audiences might the notification be aimed? (Hint: Look at the use of language.)

Purpose
   1. What is the apparent purpose of the notification?
   2. What secondary purpose might be involved?
   3. How well do you think Global's current notification fulfills its purpose(s)?

Product
   1. What product should Global use?
   2. What would make the product effective?
   3. Should Global use more than one product? If so, what should it use and why?

SKILLS APPLICATIONS

1. Think of a real-world situation, preferably one having to do with a business or an organization, that requires a written or verbal response from you. Based on your scenario, create a list of relevant CMAPP questions and answer them.

2. Use the CMAPP model to analyze a sales or promotional letter or another mailing you've received. How effective was the communication? Did it address your needs and interests as an audience? What changes might have made the letter or mailing more effective?

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES CASE

E-mail and Your Audience. As an employee of your company, you have an e-mail to send to a member of your staff; however, the would-be receiver of the e-mail is in a very bad mood. Does this factor impact your decision about sending an e-mail? If so, explain how. How might you approach your receiver in this situation?

CASE STUDIES

2A Ann Arbor University Student Association Function

Situation

During construction of the Student Association Building (the SAB), the Ann Arbor University Student Association (AAUSA) has continued to rent from the university the following premises:

◆ Office space in the Dominion Building (main administration building) for the ten members of the AAUSA Executive (AAUSAEx).

◆ A "student space" (a former classroom) on the main floor of Vanier Square (the engineering building), containing several video-game terminals, two football tables, a ping-pong table, an ATM, food and drink vending machines, and several tables and chairs.

◆ A small editorial office in the Confederation Building (used primarily for Department of Humanities faculty offices) for the editor and associate editor of the student newspaper, *The Muckraker*.

When it wishes to put on functions such as concerts, dances, or parties, AAUSAEx normally arranges to rent either Sassoon Hall, the university's main auditorium, or one of two conference rooms named after corporate benefactors Accelerated Enterprises Ltd. (AEL) and Radisson Automobiles Inc. (RAI).

After heated debate, AAUSAEx decides, on November 8, to celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday with a concert the Monday before the holiday. Jack Lee, the AAUSAEx functions coordinator, immediately sends an AAU room-booking form

to the Room-Booking Office; he also confirms bookings with (and sends checks to) two popular local bands, Hodgepodge and Really Me. As usual, he contracts with a local company, Specialties, to produce and distribute posters and flyers advertising the event. He has to pay extra because the work is a rush job.

Checking the AAUSAEx mailbox on Wednesday of the following week, Jack is shocked to find his booking form returned and marked "rejected"; he is unable to decipher the signature on it. In a bit of a panic and angry at AAU administration, he tries to contact Dorothy Palliser, the AAUSAEx president, but discovers that she is in the middle of a two-day class field trip. Realizing that he has to take immediate action, Jack leaves a voice mail for Kulwinder Atwal, the administration room-booking clerk because he is unable to reach her personally. (A transcript of Jack's message is shown in **Figure 2.6** on the next page.) As well, because he once booked the RAI Conference Room by phone and was later told there was no record of the reservation, Jack decides to hand-deliver a handwritten memo to the Room-Booking Office (**Figure 2.7** on page 32). Finally, he pens a memo to Dorothy (**Figure 2.8** on page 33), and leaves it in her mailbox.

Issues to Think About

In analyzing this scenario using CMAPP, you have to consider the following interconnected communications involving AAU and AAUSAEx: the original booking form completed by Jack, Jack's voice mail to Kulwinder, Jack's memo to the Room-Booking Office, and Jack's memo to Dorothy.

Original Booking Form

Not having seen the original booking form, we don't know if it was completed incorrectly—a possible reason for its rejection. But we do know that it was submitted less than two weeks before the planned concert—another possible explanation for its rejection because Sassoon Hall might have already been reserved for another function. We also know very little about the relationship between AAU administration and AAUSAEx. Had there been problems before? Had the administration been unnecessarily rigid in its requirements? Had AAUSAEx been lax in submitting rental payments? Had there been incidences of damage to university property? Do you think that any of these details of context might have had an impact on the present rejection?

Voice Mail

Answer the following questions for analysis (see **Figure 2.6**). Then create a revised text for Jack's voice-mail message.

What can you say about the content of the message? Is it specific? Does it contain all the information that Kulwinder will need to look into the matter? For example, will she know that Jack is the AAUSAEx functions coordinator? Shouldn't he have given his last name too? Why hasn't he left a number and a time for her to reach him?

FIGURE 2.6   Transcript of Lee's Voice Mail to Atwal

Hi! It's Jack from AAUSDAEx.

How come our booking was rejected? No one told us there was going to be a problem. We've already got Hodgepodge and Really Me coming, and Specialties has some stuff up already.

Can you call me and tell me what's wrong with it?

Is the message polite? Has Jack given sufficient thought to his audience? What might Kulwinder's reaction to the message be? Do you think that Jack's purpose is clear to Kulwinder? More importantly, do you think that Jack himself has a clear idea of his purpose? Does he simply want, as his message states, Kulwinder to call him back and tell him what was wrong with his booking form? Or does he really want Kulwinder to find a venue for the concert?

What about Jack's product? Is leaving a voice mail the best way for him to communicate? Should he have tried to reach someone else? Did he take likely delays into account when he decided to leave the voice mail? Do you think the voice mail is an effective product in this context? Why or why not?

Memo to Room-Booking Office

Answer the following questions for analysis (see **Figure 2.7**). Then create a revised memo for Jack. (This time, let's consider the product first.)

Is a handwritten memo acceptable, or should Jack have word-processed it? (Hint: Is it a personal or professional communication? How might the distinction be important in this context?) Did you notice the misspelling in the To line? Should Jack have included the year as part of the date? Why might these things matter?

Here are some other questions you might ask yourself about this memo:

- Does Jack's message contain all the necessary information? What significant information might be lacking?
- Will Jack's wording of the Subject line allow the Room-Booking Office to find the relevant information easily? How might this influence the context?
- How many requests does the memo contain? Are these clearly expressed?
- To whom is the memo addressed? Why did Jack leave a voice mail for a particular person (Kulwinder) but address his memo to "Room-Booking Office"? Do you think Jack knows whether AAU's administration has a section called "Room-Booking Office"? Why might this be important?
- Does the first sentence of the last paragraph imply that if the Room-Booking Office does not have questions, Jack does not want them to call?
- How might the likely audience respond to the last sentence? Who do you think that audience is? Do you think Jack knows who his audience is likely to be?

FIGURE 2.7   Lee's Memo to Room-Booking Office

AAUSAEx Memo

To: *Room-Boking Office, Administration*
From: *Jack Lee, Functions Coordinator*
Date: *November 16*
Subject: *Rock Concert*

I booked Sassoon Hall for our Thanksgiving concert and already hired the bands and got the publicity arranged. Now you've rejected our booking without saying why, and we don't have time to get our arrangements changed. I've already left voice mail for Kulwinder but can't get hold of her to do anything about it. The bands want to set up at 6 p.m., and we want to arrange with the caf to get food and refreshments. Would you please remake our booking?

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call me. Otherwise, we'll just assume you made another mistake.

Memo to Dorothy

Answer the following questions for analysis (see **Figure 2.8**). Then create a revised memo for Jack.

How does the fact that Dorothy is another student (possibly a friend of Jack's) affect the context? Why didn't Jack simply copy Dorothy on his memo to the Room-Booking Office? Should he have attached a copy of that memo when he wrote to her? Why or why not?

Here are some other questions to ponder:

- What do you think Dorothy will do with Jack's memo?
- Might the Date line be a problem later?
- Words always carry two meanings: the denotation, which is the literal meaning, and the connotation, which is the emotional content or the impression created. Both meanings have an impact. What is the connotation of Jack's Subject line, and what do you think it says about him?
- Do you think Jack's wording says anything about his purpose? (Hint: Think about primary and secondary purposes.)
- Is the message clear? Is it specific? Will Dorothy find it useful? Do you think she will want other information? If so, what information?
- Is the language formal or informal? Is it appropriate for this audience, context, message, and purpose? Why or why not?
- Is the product effective? Why or why not?

FIGURE 2.8   Lee's Memo to Palliser

AAUSAEx Memo

To: Dorothy
From: Jack
Date: Wednesday
Subject: Another Admin Foul-Up

We got a problem with the booking for the concert on Thanksgiving, but I think I fixed it.

As usual, Admin goofed and rejected the booking I sent before. So I phoned the booking clerk and I sent a memo that I took over by hand so we don't take any more chances and left with Admin too.

I told them when Hodgepodge and Really Me need to set up and when the cafe is bringing over the stuff and that Specialties are already working too.

I guess you're just as ticked as I am. This isn't the first time they screwed up with us. Hope we can get it going fast, don't you?

I'll be in class Mon morning when you get back, but call me when you can.

2B Reorganization Notice at Radisson Automobiles Inc. (RAI)

Situation

At RAI's head office, Griffin Radisson, the president and CEO, has become concerned about what he sees as increasing decentralization of authority. He thinks that RAI's growing network of dealerships has diminished his own control over daily operations and overall company direction.

Recently Radisson persuaded the board of directors to impose in three months' time an organizational change that will have an impact on all seven RAI dealerships. As of January 1, 20--, each dealership vice president will report directly to Radisson rather than to the board. Furthermore, each dealership general manager will report not to the respective dealership vice president, but to the head office company manager, Celine Roberts.

The board members were reluctant to endorse this change. They foresaw considerable opposition on the part of dealership vice presidents and general managers over what might be perceived as a sudden lack of trust in their abilities. Over the last several years, all dealerships have been reporting increased profits and a decline in the number of customer complaints. Local dealership management has thus had good reason to believe that it has been instrumental in RAI's success.

The board also argued that three months did not leave sufficient time to work out all the inevitable administrative complications. But Radisson, who remains RAI's principal shareholder, prevailed. Now the dealerships must be notified of the coming reorganization. Radisson has decided to impose his will on the board once again and communicate the news personally. His memo to the dealerships appears in **Figure 2.9** on the next page. His attachments are shown in **Figure 2.10** on page 36 and **Figure 2.11** on page 37.

Issues to Think About

In deciding whether or not Griffin Radisson conducted an effective CMAPP analysis before communicating, consider the following issues. Complete your analysis of Radisson's message; then create a revised version.

- **Context.** Radisson's position and forceful personality served him well in persuading reluctant board members to endorse his plan. Although we know little about his relationship with the dealership vice presidents, we can assume they will not be happy with a reorganization that will have a dramatic impact on two sets of relationships: those between Roberts and the general managers and those between the general managers and their local vice presidents. Another complication is geography. The physical distance between the players means that future communications are not likely to be face to face.

- **Product.** What is your assessment of Radisson's choice of product? Because the communication is internal (within an organization), a memo is appropriate. On the other hand, what might have been the effect on the relationships if Radisson had first held a conference call and then followed up in writing?

- **Message.** What do you think is the crux of Radisson's message? Can you identify any secondary message? What kind of impression is conveyed by the tone of the memo? (Hint: Think about connotation as well as denotation.) What might the message say to the audience about Radisson as a person? Do you think the two attachments help or hinder Radisson's message? Will his audience understand them easily, or will they need further explanation? If further explanation is required, what form should it take?

- **Audience.** The memo is addressed to dealership vice presidents and general managers, with copies going to board members and the company manager. How many different audiences do you think are really involved? Which audience do you think is the primary one? Should they all receive the same message or messages? What differences in interpretation might there be on the part of these audiences?

- **Purpose.** Does Radisson have more than one purpose? What do you think he is trying to do? What do you think he is actually doing? What do you think the various audiences will identify as his purpose or purposes? How do you think they will view the attached organizational charts in terms of perceived purpose?

FIGURE 2.9   Radisson's Reorganization Memo

Radisson Automobiles Radisson

Memorandum

To: Dealership Vice Presidents and General Managers

From: Griffin Radisson, CEO

Date: December 1, 20–

Subject: Reorganization

cc: Board of Directors, Company Manager Celine Roberts

As you know, I believe in being concise and straightforward in all my dealings with both clients and company personnel. Therefore, I am announcing to you now the reorganization of Radisson Automobiles.

As of January 1, 20–, the Current Organizational Chart (copy attached) will be superseded by the Revised Organizational Chart (copy attached).

The board of directors and I recognize that administrative details must still be worked out. Nonetheless, we are confident that the new organization will be to the benefit of the company, a goal we are sure you all share.

Celine Roberts is looking forward to receiving annual operational plans from the dealership general managers. I am likewise looking forward to receiving annual business plans from the vice presidents.

I know I can count on your cooperation.

Attachments

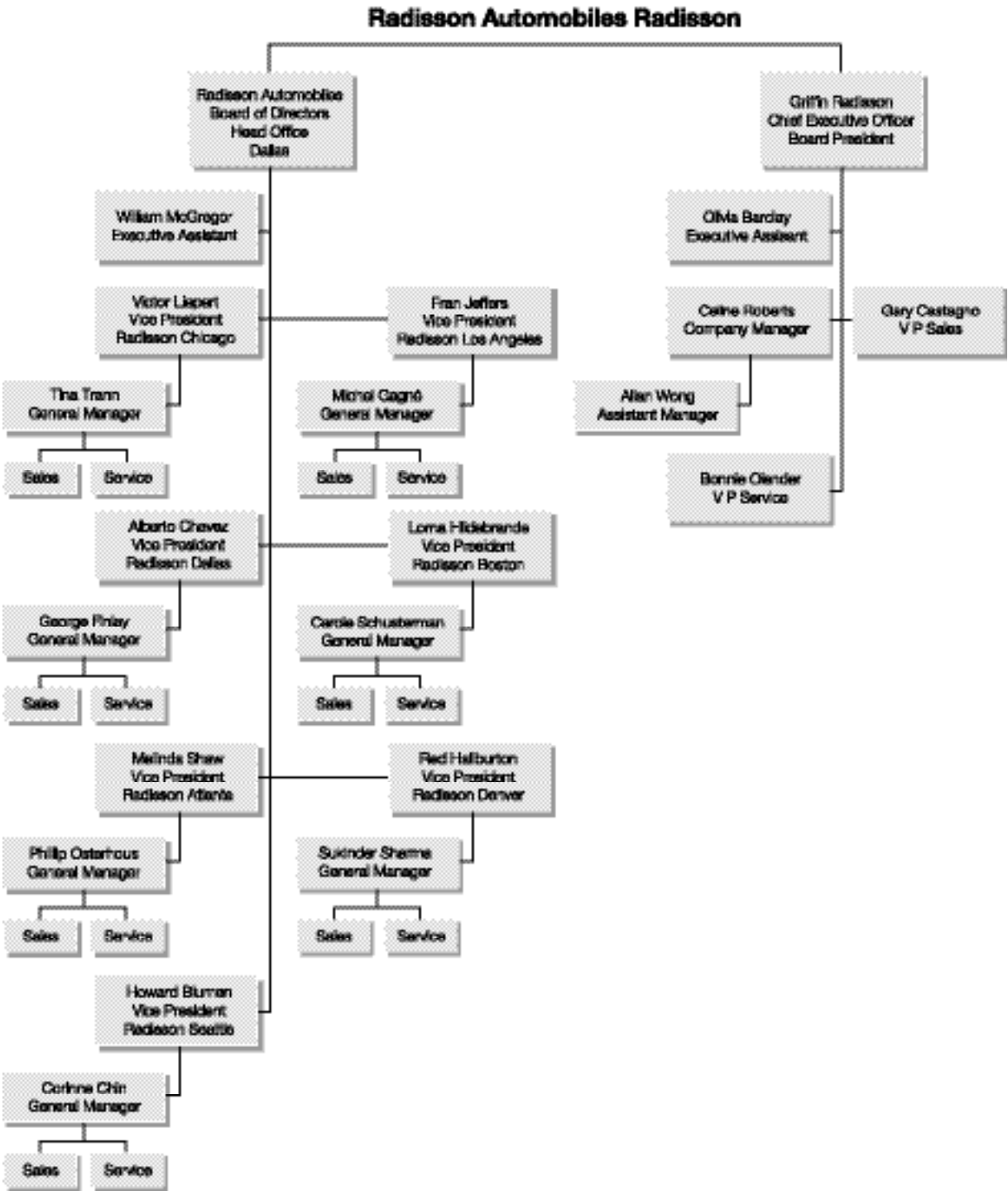**FIGURE 2.10**   RAI's Current Organizational Chart

FIGURE 2.11   RAI's Revised Organizational Chart