UNIT 3: UNDERSTANDING AUDIENCES

OVERVIEW

In this unit, you will learn to do a detailed audience analysis that will help you write appropriately for different kinds of audiences. One goal of this unit is to help you work with both general and specific audiences when you write. In addition to classifying audiences as general and specific, writers can achieve clarity by focusing on other audience characteristics. Careful audience analysis and commitment to clarity can improve the quality of writing by making it more direct.

The makeup of an audience can influence the media a writer chooses for presenting and delivering information, the choice of words, and how the writer expects the audience to react to the information presented. You will learn to distinguish between primary and secondary audiences as well as how to shape your writing appropriately for each type.

A final goal of this unit is to help you understand the challenges faced by managers who write to people of other cultures. Even when business writing is translated into other languages, communication mishaps still occur because of different cultural perceptions, values, and word usage. You will learn a number of strategies for designing cross-cultural communication.

OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

- differentiate reader- and writer-based writing

- analyze complex audiences

- list ways in which audience assessment influences choice of media used to convey information

- analyze how an audience will use information based on tasks they perform

- evaluate the needs of two special audiences within an organization

- list five strategies for designing information that is cross-cultural

DISCUSSION

Managers frequently play more than one role; they are supervisors, coworkers, and employees within large agencies or organizations. These changing roles require audience assessment skills to help managers make useful decisions about how to convey information to different kinds of people. Managers must also pass these skills on to those who work for them and be able to detect audience-related problems in the writing of others.

THE AUDIENCE

An **audience** is anyone who will listen to you or read what you write. Audiences consist of people who act as receivers of communication from others. They can be specific individuals who are clearly delineated (such as your neighbor) or they can consist of more people and be less well known to you (such as members of your child's parent-teacher organization). Most of us recognize and communicate well with specific audiences, especially in spoken communication, and less well with general audiences.

Writing for a **general audience** usually means that you do not have a specific audience in mind. If you write a feature for a newspaper about your company's progress, for example, you will probably write for a general audience, unless the newspaper has a limited and specialized readership. Writing for a **specific audience** can occur when you write a memo to a specific employee or group of employees, or to your supervisor. Many managers mistakenly believe that they are writing for general audiences even when they are writing to specific people within their department or organization.

One reason why you communicate easily in face-to-face conversation or with someone on a telephone is because you receive visual or verbal cues from your audience to tell you when communication has occurred or when it has failed. Often, you may know the person you are talking to. Even if you don't, some characteristics of that person are immediately evident. When you interview a prospective employee, for example, you can pinpoint the employee's age, sex, race, and other characteristics fairly easily. As conversation progresses, you learn more about the candidate. For example, you might learn that he or she is married, has a college degree, or has just returned from vacation. In spoken communication, the ability to know your audience and to adjust your presentation to them is inherent, to some extent, in the communication itself. Unless they are giving formal speeches, few people analyze their audience

before speaking. In written communication, however, determining the audience for a piece of writing is a significant and fundamental prelude to any writing activity.

Before beginning a writing project, writers need to analyze the audiences who will read their work because writers usually do not interact with these people as communication occurs. Because time and space can intervene between writers and their audience, writers must assess ahead of time what will and will not work in getting the audience's attention. Literary writers have known about the need for audience analysis for years, and often use their works as arenas for discussing the relationship between writer and audience. Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writers, such as John Milton and Henry Fielding, for example, routinely addressed their readers directly with phrases such as "Courteous Reader" or "Gentle Reader."

Most audiences expect writing to engage their attention as well as to present information. Writers who practice audience analysis are usually more effective in communicating with readers because they can anticipate readers' needs and preferences. Audience analysis promotes reader-based rather than writer-based writing, and thus helps to eliminate failed communication.

To understand why audience analysis is important for contemporary writers, let's consider again the example of the Morton Thiokol engineers discussed in unit 1. In 1990, writing in the *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, Dorothy Winsor speculates that the Challenger disaster occurred because of failed communication between the engineers and their managers, with whom the ultimate responsibility for canceling the mission resided. Even though engineering documents discussed the possibility that the O-rings might malfunction at low temperatures (based on experimental data that the engineers had amassed), engineering administrators and managers did not understand how likely it was that the rings would malfunction.

Missing from the engineers' careful, scientific analysis of data collected from experiments on O-rings, was an equally careful analysis of who their writing was for. In an analysis of Winsor's theory, Barbara Couture (1992) points out that the engineers' failure to visualize an audience actively using what was contained in their written reports is characteristic of much scientific writing. Because scientific writing strives to present information objectively, many engineers, accustomed to an objective style, eschew writing that is judgmental. Accustomed to writing for other engineers who are capable (and in the habit) of drawing conclusions from what they read, Thiokol's engineers failed to adjust their reporting style so that managers would

recognize the need to act. They failed, in essence, to understand and adjust for their audience's needs.

The disastrous consequences of failed communication surrounding the Challenger incident highlight the need for reader-based writing, but examples also abound in the everyday workplace. Technical specifications, relocation procedures, personnel reports, even intercom messages often go awry because writers and speakers fail to understand the characteristics of their audiences. To provide more thoughtful writing in the workplace, managers must practice—and expect their employees to practice—audience analysis during the prewriting stage.

CLASSIFYING AUDIENCES

Classifying audiences by their significance as users, the first step in performing audience analysis, can help writers select the appropriate tone, style, and amount of information for writing. The **tone** of a document shows the relationship between an audience and the document's author. Deciding what tone to adopt helps you to decide whether or not you will use contractions, such as "can't" and "don't," or whether you will address readers using the familiar "you" form. Both the tone and style of writing are affected by a writer's assessment of audience.

Complex audiences contain people with different levels of interest in what the writer writes; they are often called *primary* and *secondary audiences*. When writing for people in other organizations, writers can almost always assume that they are writing to complex audiences; however, much internal writing can be for complex audiences as well. An employee who writes a weekly project summary, for example, may be writing with his or her manager in mind as the primary audience, but the summary may have a secondary audience—his or her peers, his or her manager's manager, or a project review officer charged with overseeing a number of projects.

Because readers can differ greatly in what they bring to and derive from writing, writers need to be able to identify and rank audiences as primary or secondary. **Primary audiences** are audiences for whom writing is originally intended. **Secondary audiences** consist of others who may also read what is written. Given the complexity of most modern organizations, most writing within organizations will require that writers acknowledge the existence of both types.

Many employees need help in identifying secondary audiences and in devising strategies for writing to audiences other than their immediate managers. Managers can encourage thorough audience analysis by encouraging writers to classify their audience for each writing task, and by discouraging the perception that the manager is always the audience for employee writing. Writers should list everything they know about the members of a complex audience, including their jobs, nationalities, education, levels of technical expertise, seniority, and perceived need for or interest in the information to be conveyed. An audience analysis should address the characteristics of both the primary and secondary audience. Often, as in the example below, the two types of audience have vastly different characteristics, and can vary greatly in what they expect and derive from the writing.

Analyzing Primary and Secondary Audiences

To understand how various groups within an organization might be classified, let's follow the progress of one manager's memorandum to employees concerning a new procedure for filling in time cards.

TO: Employees of Department 90

FROM: Joe Jones, Manager

SUBJECT: Enhanced Procedures for Filling in Time Cards

DATE: April 3, 1992

On May 1, 1992, all employees of Department 90 will be able to fill in time cards online. The "online" time card is a computer application that will allow all employees to store time and attendance data in a company-maintained database. The new, online time cards will be phased in during the month of May, and by June 1, 1992, all employees will be expected to be using the online time card.

To learn how to fill in an online time card, you can use one of the following methods:

1. Read the procedures manual available from our department secretary, and work with the online tutorial that is contained on the diskette inside the manual.

2. Enroll in the half-day class, **New Time Cards**, that will be taught every Friday morning throughout April in Room 600.

When you have completed either of these two practices, sign the Competency book that is located at the secretary's desk. This will inform me that you have learned how to work with the new time card procedures.

cc: Mary Smith, Department Secretary
Frank Johnson, Director of Training

In this example, Joe Jones has assumed that both primary and secondary audiences will read his memo. He expects his primary audience—employees who must learn the new time card procedures—to read the memo and devise a self-initiated plan for learning the system. Jones provides these employees some options that will help them learn the new system, and that is where his secondary audiences become apparent. Both the department secretary and the director of training are copied on the memo because they will provide some of the services that Jones describes.

To perform an audience analysis for the primary and secondary audiences in Jones' memo, we might devise a table such as the one below. By entering characteristics of each

audience as part of a prewriting brainstorming session, writers can identify pertinent information and then apply it to what they write.

Table 3.1
Sample Primary and Secondary Audience Analysis

Primary Audience: Employees	Secondary Audience: Frank & Mary	Implications for Writing
60% college-educated	Frank: college-educated Mary: high school	Write memo and procedures 8–10th grade level.
20% computer literate	Both computer literate	Post online memo to Frank and Mary. Mail hardcopy to everyone else.
10% experience with online time cards	Frank has learned online time card.	Define "online time card" for employees and Mary in memo.
15% usually late filling in regular time card	N/A	Define generous learning period and specify date by which everyone must learn. Mention method of accountability.

Analyzing General Audiences

It is sometimes necessary to write to general audiences whose members are not well known to you. Although most writers would prefer it to be otherwise, in some cases, a general audience might be the primary audience for a piece of writing. Audience analysis becomes more difficult in such cases because it is harder to characterize what you do not know. When a general audience is the primary audience, writers need to try to analyze the audience according to what can be logically inferred about it. Otherwise, invalid assumptions come into play. Although it is usually more difficult, writers can determine the characteristics of general audiences by doing some research prior to writing. Sometimes the results of such audience analysis can profoundly affect the way you write and organize material.

PERFORMING TASK ANALYSIS

Once writers have a portrait of the audience, they should analyze what that audience will do with the information to be written. This process, called *task analysis*, is also a useful technique for managers. **Task analysis** helps you determine how readers will react to, or act on, what you write. Effective task analysis helps you transform writing from writer-based to reader-based, and it can affect the way you gather information and write. If you know, for example, that a group of employees will use a memo you write as the basis for applying for benefits through the personnel office, you may want to synchronize your description of the benefits with that given out by the personnel office. This makes it easier for employees, and it may help you avoid embarrassing and costly contradictions. In addition, you will want to ensure that the benefits and policies pertaining to them are clearly described, in language that employees understand. If your memo involves procedures that employees must follow, you should ensure that all prerequisites are in place so that the procedures can be followed smoothly.

One often-misconstrued aspect of task analysis is the requirement for writers to visualize the tasks readers might perform as a result of having read what is written. Writer-based writers frequently interpret task analysis to mean an analysis of the tasks *they* must perform as writers, not what *their readers* will perform. Writers who understand the tasks of their readers, however, will make adjustments in the way they write or present their writing to accommodate the audience.

Good examples of the need to provide task analysis as part of audience analysis can be derived from the computer industry. In both the hardware and software sides of this industry, technical writers must envision the tasks that a hardware or software user will want to perform, and understand what their audience will go through when they buy, assemble, or use a computer. Technical writers in the computer industry create scenarios in their writing to help readers visualize what they have to do to perform various activities. Such scenarios can be constructed from tables such as the following.

Table 3.2
Sample Task Analysis Table

System Function: Logon	User Task
Using command string	Type commands and parameters, then type password. (Must remember parameter string. Must know password and how to reset. Preferred method for expert users.)
Using icon	Click on application icon. (Must recognize icon. Preferred method for novices. Icon not visible on some terminals.)
Using function key	Press function key. (Must recognize key word. Help available. Also preferred for novices.)
Responding to error message	Read message and clear. (Follow directions in Help for remedy. Appropriate for all user types.)

Notice that in this table, the writer attempts to list prerequisites to performing each user task as well as the task itself. Often, the prerequisites are themselves tasks that might be described in a similar part, or another version of the writer's table. A complete task analysis of the system he or she is describing for the identified audience, may take the writer months to complete. Identifying major tasks during the audience analysis phase of prewriting, however, will help the writer identify other less-apparent tasks and is therefore a valuable activity. Think of how you might complete such a table for task analysis as a mission statement or budget projection for your company or department.

WRITING FOR THE AUDIENCE

Once writers have classified their audience and performed task analysis, they must then write for the audience they have specified. As stated, writing with an audience in mind requires that writers organize their writing for that audience, select words and tone carefully, decide on the length and presentation characteristics of their work, and select an appropriate medium for presentation. In performing all of these tasks, writers should allow what they have learned during prewriting audience analysis to govern individual decisions they make while writing.

Organizing Writing

Most business readers are interested in being able to retrieve work-related information quickly and efficiently. Employees who receive memos from managers want to know what they must do in response to the memo. Managers reading employee status reports want to know what has been achieved, what has not been achieved, and what problems employees are facing in accomplishing job-related tasks. Specific strategies for organizing writing so that it addresses the needs of readers will be discussed in detail in a later unit. In this unit, we will discuss the relationship between audience characteristics and organizational strategies.

Much research has been done to determine how writers should organize their material to achieve maximum audience response to it. In the early 1980s, for example, the Document Design Center of The American Institutes for Research was among the first to devise *Guidelines for Document Designers* (1981). The *Guidelines* presented substantiating, industry-based research and recommended writing strategies based on the research. These strategies included providing an overview of main ideas; discussing subjects of common interest first, followed by less well known subjects; and arranging (nesting) headings to reveal organizing principles at a glance.

Since the early 1980s, other researchers have identified effective ways to organize writing that will appear in simple online programs, in hypertext systems or relational databases, or in radio and television scripts. Because the needs of the audience can vary for different media, the advice given for one writing situation may not work well in another. The strategic use of overviews to provide context and to orient readers in hardcopy books, for example, does not work as well for readers in hypertext systems, where information is presented in discreet nodes which can be searched and accessed randomly. Rather than follow a single set of rules for organizing their writings, writers in modern organizations should derive principles that will work with particular audiences and particular writing assignments—principles such as the following, which were devised by a writing team leader to share with her fellow writers of personnel manuals.

Leslie's Writing Principles for Team A

- Organize what you are writing by first using standard book-oriented divisions such as volume, chapter, part, and section.

- Arrange material in a manner that assists hardcopy readers, and that will not interfere with online access; for example, you might organize all payroll-related topics in a chapter concerning payroll, arranging the topics by how frequently the payroll office receives questions about each topic.

- Once you have established book orientation, divide material into units or chunks that other team members can adapt. Because we are writing different books, but need some of the same information, dividing what you write into manageable chunks may increase the chance that it can be reused or reworked for use by another writer. (A manageable chunk, in this case, is described as a single procedure or discrete task, such as "Calling Your Personnel Officer," or "Mailing a Benefits Claim.")

- Provide section overviews at the beginnings of major sections. Include a list of key words in each overview for linking by online users.

- When writing an actual procedure, always organize your sentence or lead-in by saying what is to be achieved first, before you tell readers how to achieve it. For example: "To list your name with a personnel officer, call Ext. 895 and ask the operator to assign an officer to you."

Such lists are necessities for most collaborative writing because they help to ensure consistency of approach. Individual writers can benefit from maintaining such lists, too, because they encourage writers to understand, and not just mimic, principles for organizing material based on the audience.

Selecting and Arranging Words

If meaning is conveyed through the arrangement of words in sentences, then selecting and arranging words is perhaps the most significant activity of any writer. A writer's **diction**, or choice of words, and the **syntax**, or arrangement of them in meaningful patterns, are influenced by decisions that the writer makes about audience and the audience's reasons for reading. Writers on the job are continually asked to provide words that meet the needs of certain audiences. For example, marketing employees may be asked to write product information disclosures that advertise new products to prospective customers, administrators may write position papers that describe and explain corporate or governmental policies for citizens, and managers may report routinely to upper management on employee performance, budgetary matters, and operational procedures.

In unit 2, you learned about the need for managers to encourage and make good word choices as a means of weeding out bad writing. In that unit, you were advised to cultivate a sensitivity to words and their interpretation among employees. As part of audience analysis, you can extend the concept so that you and the writers whom you manage not only avoid words that might offend, but also seek to use words that will convey meaning to a particular audience in the best possible manner.

A matrix such as that in the following table can assist writers in matching particular words with the needs and expectations of particular audiences. This table, created by an insurance industry marketing team, attempts to identify terms that the team believes will be useful to sales agents in communicating with existing or potential customers.

Table 3.3
A Marketer's Table of Terms

Customer	Terms
Art Hruska, machinist	• cost and availability through payroll deduction • operator liability • safety inspection frequency and rationale • supplemental disability
Sherrie Towns, health care worker	• purchase price • pregnancy disability • term life • dependent care • accidental death coverage
AVVCO Inc., small engineering company	• per capita cost • group travel • company supplemental • disability compensation • accidental liability
Harold and Phyllis Leibman, retirees	• initial cost • eligibility • health care coverage • Medicare-compatible provisions • age qualifications • annual deductible

Equally as important as word choice, the arrangement of words can be influenced by audience analysis. For example, imagine that the same insurance marketing team that devised table 3.3 also was responsible for writing the product disclosure for a new kind of term life insurance. How might the sales agents react to the arrangement of words in the following sentences, and within the paragraph as a whole, given what they already know about their customers?

> Although not for everyone, our new term life policy represents a substantial
> investment opportunity for a modest initial investment. If you are currently
> working or are thinking about retirement, term life insurance will add the layer
> of security you have been looking for. And, if you already hold an account with
> us, for a limited time, you can purchase our term life policy with a discount of up
> to one-third the original price.

The choice and arrangement of words can have a profound effect on the way meaning is conveyed and understood. The words not only convey information, but by their nature and combined meaning, they can create a special tone or greatly alter the existing tone. Managers especially need to understand how the arrangement of words affects tone, and be sensitive to using words to create a tone that will effectively convey their message to employees. In the example below, notice the change in tone after a manager revised the diction and arrangement of words in a departmental status report circulated to all employees in his department.

> *Original statement*: Annual salary increases this year will be based on manager-formulated merit
> assessments, due to a need for greater local accountability and control of financial resources.
>
> *Revision*: This year, your salary increase will be based on your and my assessment
> of what your merit pay should be. A percentage for increase will not be
> automatically assigned to you. The corporation believes that this step is necessary
> to provide managers with more direct control over financial resources and to allow employees to
> assess their performance.

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK

In most business environments, customer satisfaction provides a measure of how well a good or service is being received by those using it. Most competitive businesses realize the importance of receiving and reacting to customer feedback. Because it frequently addresses quality issues, customer feedback can help businesses determine how to improve quality. Feedback on products or services can influence the design of future products or services, or provide a basis for creating new ones or improving existing ones. For writers, too, feedback from an audience can provide an important avenue for improving writing. Many writers, however, never consider requesting feedback on what they write.

Managers can ensure that employees receive adequate feedback on their writing by always reacting to it themselves, and by encouraging employees to seek additional avenues of evaluation such as peer reviews. When writing projects are ultimately circulated outside a department, for example, departmental writers might attach reader surveys or schedule meetings to collect feedback. Documents and publications created for distribution outside of a company—product assembly or user manuals, for example—may also include surveys, reader comment forms, or fax and telephone numbers that provide ways for readers to react to what they read. Although it is sometimes difficult to separate customers' comments about what they read from comments voicing dissatisfaction or satisfaction with the performance of a product or with the behavior of someone providing a service, it is still beneficial for writers to solicit such comments. Shrewd writers collect such comments, not only to learn something about what they write, but also to increase their knowledge of a particular audience for future reference.

SPECIAL AUDIENCES

Special audiences consist of people with special needs or expectations that set them apart from the average American readers. They include people with physical or mental handicaps or disabilities, such as hearing or visually impaired people, as well as people whose cultural or language histories differ from those of the majority of Americans. Such audiences place specific demands on writers to make their writing accessible and easily understood. Occasionally, as in multinational corporations or corporations that specialize in working with special groups, writers may encounter existing policies and processes that will assist them in meeting the demands of special audiences. All too often, however, writers are simply left to their own devices to write in any way they wish—and usually that means in ways that appeal exclusively to average American readers.

Just how pervasive is the need to write for special audiences? Researchers have estimated that perhaps 1 in every 20 Americans suffers from some disability that may impair his or her ability to communicate in a normal manner. These disabilities can range from blindness to hearing deprivation to speech impediments. In some parts of the country, increasing numbers of people for whom English is a second language also contribute to the complexity of reading audiences. It is possible that, in the coming decades, at least one-tenth of the American work force will consist of non-native speakers and readers of English. Add to this an increased trend toward international business and transcontinental business ventures, and the implications for writers in the near future become clear.

Strategies for Cross-Cultural Writing

Not all managers face such challenges, but many managers in today's large, multinational organizations must write to people who do not share either their corporate or national cultures. American businesses can communicate successfully with businesses in other countries by instituting policies of cultural neutrality and by encouraging employee sensitivity to cultural differences. Writers and document designers can write strategically for other cultures—for example, by understanding when their writing will be translated and when it will be read "as a second language," by checking diction to ensure that words are used only in their truest sense and not idiomatically, by using humor sparingly and carefully, and by designing art and photography to be culturally representative.

As you read the sample document below, imagine that you are a German, French, or Italian citizen, someone who will eventually translate what is in the sample into the language of another country where the payroll system described will be installed.

New Payroll System

The company's new payroll system is designed to standardize payroll procedures company-wide. It offers the advantage of easy access for both domestic and foreign branches, and it allows employees to take advantage of a "hands-on" approach to getting the job of payroll recordation done. In the long run, it will save our company billions of dollars in overhead costs. What are we waiting for? Let's begin a blitzkreig operation, and be the first division to implement.

This sample, which becomes progressively more colloquial and idiomatic, would pose problems for non-native speakers and for translators because of its tone, use of contractions

(let's), use of expressions such as "hands-on," confusing reference to "domestic" and "foreign," reference to "billions" (a unit of measurement that is difficult to represent in some monetary systems), and the use of the non-English and culturally sensitive word *blitzkreig* in the closing sentence. This memo could engender ill will between manager and employees as well as confusion.

Without special training, it is difficult to fully appreciate the challenges that English-oriented, print-oriented media pose for members of special audience groups. When writing to such groups, writers should adopt policies that will accommodate the needs of the group and make information more accessible. Editorial checklists, such as that provided in table 3.4, are a good starting point.

Table 3.4
Sample Checklist for Culturally Neutral Writing

XYZ Corporation's Checklist for Writers to Non-English Audiences	
3	Check all diction for cultural neutrality.
3	Make sure that words will translate well. Avoid idioms, slang, and nonstandard uses.
3	Avoid humor, sports metaphor, or uniquely American language or references.
3	Check numerology.
3	Edit for punctuation, monetary amounts and symbols, etc., that might differ in other languages.
3	Check for missing articles, pronouns, and prepositions.
3	Use only standard abbreviations.
3	Avoid long or syntactically difficult sentence constructions.
3	Avoid words that depend on the readers' viewpoint (such as these terms: *domestic*, *foreign*, *immigrant*).

Managers of multinational, multicultural corporations should invest in training, not only for writers, but for all workers who will communicate daily with people from other countries or cultures. Organizations such as the U.S. Census Bureau, the Agency for International Development, IBM, and AT&T all provide such training for their employees, with an emphasis on cross-cultural and cross-national communication.

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REVIEW QUESTIONS

1.   Why do managers and employees often fail to differentiate between general and special audiences?

2.   What is a complex audience, and what strategies can be used in writing for such an audience?

3.   List five things that writers should be encouraged to specify before writing for a complex audience.

4.   How does reader-based writing differ from writer-based writing?

5.   How might the writer's audience have influenced the choice of media used to present information in each of the following situations? List at least one assumption about the audience that is implicit in each choice:

   •   a decision to disseminate information about changes in employee withholding taxes via the payroll system

   •   a decision to archive important corporate policies on microfiche

   •   a decision to include audio descriptions of procedures that will be made available to employees on CD/ROM disks

6.   What is the difference between task analysis and a writer's analysis of the scope of his or her own work?

7.   How could a writer show awareness of different kinds of audiences in the following writing tasks:

   •   reporting the results of a heart attack to a spouse of the victim and to a nurse

   •   describing the charges leveled against a suspect in a robbery attempt to both judge and jury

   •   analyzing a company's growth during a single fiscal year

8.   List five writing strategies for creating culturally neutral writing.

INTEGRATING QUESTIONS

1.   What is the relationship between audience analysis and other prewriting activities associated with planning writing tasks?

2.   Why are many forms of external writing examples of writing for a complex audience? What characteristics of modern business environments cause this to be true?

3.   Why is it important for corporate writing to be culturally neutral? Is it ever possible to achieve complete cultural neutrality in writing?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

•   Analyze five recent memos or letters written by you or others at your work site. Try to determine from each the characteristics of the primary audience for the communication. Make a list of the characteristics.

•   Write or visit the offices of Recording for the Blind or Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. Ask for a description of the problems faced by the visually or hearing-impaired when they attempt to communicate on the job.

•   Examine the graphics and artwork of any company doing business in Eastern or Middle Eastern countries. Do you notice any changes in the visuals offered by artists for communicating with audiences in these countries?

SUGGESTED READING

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