

# Communicating

Speaking, writing, reading, and listening are the lifeblood of every human endeavor, particularly those in applied fields like computer science and cyber security. Without communication, there would be no research journals, books, lectures, or meetings. No theories, programming languages, or video games, and no one to teach, learn, or play them. Verbal communication makes just about everything we know about computers and computing possible, every bit as much as integrated circuits and wireless signals.

Communication often results in confusion and misunderstanding, however. How do we achieve *effective* communication? This week you will learn and discuss what listeners expect of good speakers, what readers look for in clear writers, and what audiences want from effective presenters. The learning will be active, and the instructors— Krista Sarraf and Ben Rafoth—will help you to apply effective communication strategies both to Dr. Fiddner’s “Cyber Clash with China” simulation and to other situations as well.

The first session, “Speak Up: Or Forever Hold Your Peace,” focuses on three settings where speaking occurs most often: to a large group or audience, in a small-group discussion, and in an interpersonal or one-to-one setting. Speakers and listeners behave very differently in each of these settings, and you will participate in scenarios that require you to examine your assumptions about speaking and speakers.

The second session, “More Than Words: Writing for Cybersecurity,” introduces the concept of the *rhetorical situation*, which encourages you to ask, What is the message and its purpose? Who is delivering it? Who is it intended for? Though they may seem simple, these questions probe the essence of every communicative act and reveal answers to why communication succeeds or fails. In this session, we look at why some messages can do as much harm as good.

Finally, “Giving a Great Not Boring Presentation: Three Steps to Killing It” will help you learn to make your points in an effective and focused way so that you come across as credible and confident speakers and writers. That recommendation about China to the President? You’ll learn to kill it.