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Writing 150

Professor Harding

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## My Biggest Role Model: My Grandpa

### **Introduction**

Dwight Philipoom, a beloved brother, father, and grandfather who loves to eat peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for lunch, snack on ice cream after a long day of construction, and making crepes for all 30 grandkids. He enjoys teasing the little ones, going over plans as a general contractor, and serving with all his soul in various church settings. This is my grandpa, my role model, my exemplar in life. I am choosing to interview my grandpa to discuss how he has reflected on communication in his work and church environments throughout his 70 years of life, highlighting the similarities and differences within those two worlds.

### **Rhetoric**

My grandpa has seen so many changes to his communication during the course of his life. The internet, tv, email, phones, social media, etc. weren't around when my grandpa was a little boy growing up in Auckland, New Zealand. He has had to really improve his communication in this new world of technology that allows instant access to anyone anywhere while maintaining good values when talking to people face to face. During my interview with him, he mentioned the need and desire to make sure things are clear. Since he has always held leadership positions both at work and within the church, he has always had to sound like a leader, using his emotions (logos, ethos, pathos) to persuade others with a precise purpose and stance. This is known as rhetoric; Rhetoric has proven vital in making sure those who are under his watch and care

understand how important the discussion is (exigence), or what my grandpa expects out of others (stance). In construction, he has regularly communicated with employees who work under him. He mentioned that if he was not clear and precise in persuading his employees to get the job done accurately and in a timely manner, it could prove fatal in the future of the build. On the other hand, he mentioned that in his church callings, he has had to use the same authority in being clear, yet with a different purpose: to help others to come unto Christ. Although these two worlds have the same purpose, he has to use completely different means to accomplish the purpose. He told me that the use of logos, pathos, and ethos varies drastically within his church callings and in the workforce.

## **Genre**

Another tool in fulfilling his purpose of using precise and clear communication to accomplish the task at hand is how he portrays his purpose. Understanding things like genre, a fancy word for understanding your medium, structure, constraints, and relevancy in a recurring social situation, allows him to successfully communicate his thoughts and desires. One thing he mentioned in our interview was the constraints within the two worlds of work and church. I found it inherently interesting that the first thing he mentioned when it came to the differences in genre was the clothes he wears. He said that even before communicating, his clothes gave off distinct impressions. A suit and tie meant business and seriousness while ripped jeans and a neon dirty shirt meant grit and toughness. In another instance, my grandpa talked about his word choice and how crucial that was to persuading others below him. His biggest constraint was the words he could use while in a church meeting vs on the construction site. If he were to swap his genres within the church and construction, he would not have nearly the rhetoric nor clearness in his communication to be an effective leader.

## **Information Literacy**

Information Literacy, the ability to find, sort through, sift, double-check, and understand information that could help or hurt your argument, is not primarily used in construction, but rather in his various church callings. After asking my grandpa to explain to me how he makes a talk or lesson in church, something that he has had to do hundreds of times in stake conferences, sacrament meetings, the second hour of church, mission conferences, etc., I found that he is constantly on the hunt for more information. In his daily personal study, he is constantly taking notes on how he could teach a certain topic, throwing together piles of notes on his notes app on his iPad. One thing he does in his talks/lessons is use the words of current and modern-day prophets and apostles. Because so many members recognize these brethren for their service in God's kingdom, it is easier to use their words than my grandpa's own words sometimes.

## **Writing Process**

One of the most important opportunities my grandpa has to communicate his thoughts and feelings is when giving a talk at the pulpit. My grandpa follows a very similar format when writing a talk that I learned this semester in this class about the writing process. The writing process is a compilation of brainstorming ideas, making an outline, creating the piece, and finishing with as many revisions as you need. My grandpa has followed this track for many years and it has proven successful for him to follow the things he wants to talk about, but also leave room for in-the-moment impressions from the Spirit. When making a talk, he starts with a topic in mind, either assigned or thought out. After some brainstorming, he finds one to three things he would like his audience to take away from his words. He throws together a rough draft with bullet points and specific quotes he wants to use. He then proceeds to refine and revise his points

and quotes the week or two preceding his talk or lesson, allowing for more time to really ponder the words, thoughts, ideas, and doctrine he wants to teach.

## **Reflection**

My grandpa had a lot to say about reflecting on his communication throughout the years, having much time to think about the knowledge he has gained and how he has applied it through the course of his life. Reflection is unique because it allows us to take what we have experienced, think about what we want to do with that experience and apply it better in the future to create change in our life. This is referred to as the process of cognition, metacognition, and action. To summarize the words of my grandpa, the two most important things when it comes to good communication are mutual respect and having clear expectations. Without a mutual respect, it would be impossible to listen to the other person or act on what you talk about. And without communicating clearly your expectations, my grandpa said you can never expect anything to come out of that conversation. These two things are important as I embark on being more of a peacemaker in my interactions with everyone. At the end of the day, I have learned it is more important to be a peacemaker than to be right about everything.