



## Impact by Bob Manna & Matt Manna • 005A06D5(R05)

*“Articulate communication is not the same as impactful communication. Although both are important, only the latter will lead to success.”*

“You may not know exactly what your customer is thinking, but you can know how he or she thinks.” In terms of persuasive communication, this Manna Groups aphorism means that you must understand how the mind makes meaning out of the information that comes through the senses. A good way to start is to acknowledge the difference between delivering facts and creating impact.

Delivering facts is the practice of putting information in front of customers or prospects with the hope that such information will motivate a desired action. A trade show booth outfitted with a video and a stack of brochures is an example of this kind of thing.

So too are the many delivery metrics represented under such names as Frequency, Reach, Cost Per Thousand (CPM), Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Gross Impressions, Net Unduplicated Audience, Cost Per Inquiry (CPI), and others.

These metrics are like a UPS rate sheet in that they quantify delivery cost. What these metrics cannot quantify is delivery value.

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Let us be clear, delivering facts is exactly as valuable as delivering an empty box. It doesn't matter how much it costs to deliver an empty box and it doesn't matter how timely or articulately the delivery is made. An empty box is an empty box — period!

Fact based communication is more than un-valuable, it's arrogant. It assumes a customer or prospect can accept that what he or she already believes to be true is false, or at least suspect. No customer or prospect willingly enters into an inquiry about a product, service, candidate, or cause that way.

Even if it were possible to identify the rare individual capable of suspending existing beliefs, the re-evaluation time assumed by fact based communication no longer exists.

Today's marketplace of abundance is deluged with replicated products, each of which erodes the time, and most especially the equanimity, required to re-evaluate currently held beliefs.

The only effective alternative to presenting facts is to create impact. It's a hard thing to do, much harder than presenting facts. In truth creating impact is often harder to accomplish than it is to create or develop a product, service, candidate, or cause.

This is an important realization. A product, service, candidate, or cause has very little chance of success if the amount of time, talent, and money devoted to creating impact does not at least equal the amount of time, talent, and money devoted to creating the product, service, candidate, or cause. That's tough news, but it's the truth!

So how is it done? How does one create impact and in so doing persuade others to take a desired action? Start by accepting that impact and articulation are different.

Articulation means mastery of the technical skills required for clear communication. Impact is the talent to persuade others to take a desired action.

Impact occurs when the mind links messages that come through the senses to *existing* convictions, emotions, feelings, and beliefs. This has nothing at all to do with fact(s).

Convictions, emotions, feelings, and beliefs are the alphabet with which impactful communication is created. An impactful communicator knows which convictions, emotions, feelings, and beliefs— which letters of the alphabet — exist within an intended audience. His or her task is to link to, and link together, existing convictions, emotions, feelings, and beliefs in a way that “spells out” an intended action.

An impactful communicator is really only interested in addressing two questions. First, will the message being articulated link to, and link together, existing convictions, emotions, feelings, and beliefs within the intended recipient? Second, will the link(s) effect a desired outcome?

These questions exist specifically to measure what happens after message delivery. They are scarcely, if ever, connected to the cost of message delivery.

Impact requires understanding and parlaying with how the mind makes meaning from the messages received through the senses. Until this ability is mastered, an articulate conveyor of fact will accomplish little more than that of a delivery clerk dispatching empty boxes.



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**Manna Groups**

Suite 2061-1  
14500 Dallas Parkway  
Dallas, Tx 75254  
V: 972-490-1520  
[bob@mannagroups.com](mailto:bob@mannagroups.com)  
[matt@mannagroups.com](mailto:matt@mannagroups.com)