

Henricks, HowardTeaching to Change Lives

7. The Law of Communication

Hendricks argues that communication is the whole point of teaching, and it is hard work. To reach people you must first build a bridge of commonality with them, then pass along not just facts but a full life-message that touches thought, feeling, and action. The chapter walks through how to prepare, present, and refine that message—and insists the real test is what the learner ends up knowing, feeling, and doing.

Key takeaways

- Communication means 'common'—you must build commonality with people before you earn the right to be heard.
- Every real message has three parts: thought (what you know), feeling (what you feel), action (what you do). All three must be present.
- Evangelicals lean too hard on words and intellect alone; without genuine feeling and changed behavior, the message dies. What you ARE outweighs what you say.
- Words are only about 7% of communication; verbal and nonverbal must match. It's a life business, not a word business.

- Good delivery needs preparation (a hook of an introduction, illustrations, a real conclusion) and presentation (clear enunciation, volume, varied pitch and pace).
- Control what distractions you can (room, visual aids, setup); understand the internal ones you can't.
- Get feedback—make learners tell you what they understand. The test of teaching is what THEY know, feel, and do, in their own words.

Passages worth keeping

“God's method is always incarnational. He loves to take his truth and wrap it in a person.”

Sums up the chapter's claim that character, not just words, carries the message.

“The test of communication is not what you as the teacher say, but what your students say... not what you're doing, but what they're doing.”

The chapter's standard for whether real teaching happened.

How it connects

The teacher mirrors Jesus, who both lived a perfect life and spoke his message—life and lips together, never one without the other.

Scripture referenced

- **John 4** -- Jesus and the Samaritan woman—building common ground and breaking barriers to communicate.
- **John 3:16** -- 'God so loved the world'—cited to show truth carries emotion, not just intellect.
- **2 Corinthians 5:17** -- A believer as a 'new creation'—the action/behavior component of a changed life.