COMMUNICATION *by* DESIGN

Reference: summary action steps from each chapter

1. Audience-Focused Communication

- Before your next presentation or paper, write down the names of three people in your audience and what question they're hoping you'll answer.
- Draft your conclusions before you create your content. If you can't articulate what you want your audience to take away, you're not ready to write.
- Share a draft with someone and ask: "What's unclear? What seems unnecessary?" Act on what they say.

2. Designing Research Presentations

- Rewrite your slide titles as complete sentences that state a claim. Slides without an assertion may lack a purpose.
- Practice your first sixty seconds until you can deliver it without slides or notes. Knowing the opening will give you confidence.
- Give your talk to one person before you give it publicly. Ask them where they lost concentration.

3. Designing Research Papers

- Write your three major conclusions as complete sentences before you write anything else. Use these as guideposts.
- Identify five to seven figures that support your conclusions. If a figure doesn't connect to a conclusion, question whether it belongs.
- Show your outline to your advisor or a peer before drafting. Ask: "Is it clear how this advances the field?"

4. Navigating Peer Review

- Wait 24 hours before starting your response to reviews, so your defensiveness can fade.
- Structure your response with the original comment, your response, and a quote of the changed text.
- When a reviewer misses something you wrote, revise for clarity rather than just pointing to the original location.

5. Beyond Presentations & Papers

- **Advising:** Draft a meeting agenda and use it to open your next meeting.
- **Posters:** Rewrite section headings as full sentences that state your findings.
- **Conferences:** Identify two people to meet and what to ask them. Email one in advance.
- **Your CV:** Check your sections for completeness and add any recent activities.
- **Online presence:** Set aside two hours to get a photo and set up core accounts.
- **Sharing code:** Upload one artifact to a public repository with a short README.
- **Proposals:** Answer: "What problem does this funder care about that my research helps solve?"
- **Teaching:** Draft one learning objective. Define the outcome and how you'll evaluate it.

6. Systems & Tools

- Schedule a one-hour writing block at the same time each day for a week. Do nothing but write, and stop when it's over.
- Set up a reference manager. Input one reference manually and import one from Google Scholar.
- Create a notes template for literature review with three questions you're trying to answer. Fill it in for each paper you read.

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