Book Review- Dr. Shyr Chui

Supercommunicator - Explaining the complicated so anyone can understand.

Frank J. Pietrucha. AMACOM 2014. (ISBN-13: 978-0-8144-3368-3)

I spotted this one on the shelf, flicked through the first few lines of the introduction and it piqued my interest. It comes from the American Management Associations in-house publishing group.

If you work with people, you're going to need to communicate with them on a regular basis whether through presentations, talks, briefing notes and reports. These modalities represent traditional forms of communication. In the last 10-15 years, we've seen a complete multimedia digital revolution in communication. So profound has been this revolution from print-based media to digital media that it's rewiring our brains. We now struggle to read 30-page reports and PowerPoint slides crammed with texts and endless bullet points. Instead, our minds have become much more receptive to bite-sized, graphically based modes of information transfer (infographics) and short form video (YouTube, Tik Tok).

To our younger generations, this has now become the norm but what about the rest of us? How can we switch the way we inform others about important complex concepts or data without zoning our audience out and turning them off?

This book addresses this challenge and does it in a comprehensive yet accessible way. It describes the most important conceptual changes when switching from text based to multimedia-based communication but also gives important practical tips on how to achieve this whilst always coming back to the needs of the audience.

Chapter section headings include:

How digital technology is changing communication
Getting an audience to care
Building blocks and analogies.

By the end, the author not only eases us through the transition from print to digital communication but also provides us with many tips for improving our traditional text-based modes of communication too.

Favorite Quote (about simplicity vs. clarity):

"By definition, *simplicity* means being easy to understand, uncomplicated. *Clarity,* however, is defined as clearness or lucidity as to perception or understanding. Simplicity and clarity are similar in many ways, but different in other ways. The take-away here is that your job is to make content more accessible. Once again, it's essential to "know thy audience." The more you understand your audience and the better you understand your topic, the more likely you'll be able to know when to simplify and when to clarify."

Who should read this book?
Anyone who feels left behind in the multimedia revolution and wants their audience to stay awake during presentations.

Recommended?
Absolutely 4/5*