

Gerontological Communication



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Submission: September 15, 2017; **Published:** September 18, 2017

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Letter to Editor

The communication is an essential element of life, we could say that to communicate is to live, is a cross-disciplinary subject and what is called Social Communication can never be divorced from any task involving promotive activities or development plans, it is a matter that is not exclusive to journalists or communicators, and should be an essential part of professional training in general. Communicate is to express, to say, to call, to summon, to inform, to imply to agree, to lead, to advise, to influence, to draw attention to something, to discover with the weapon of language, observation, reflection and analysis. And there are many ways of communicating, different languages spoken, written, mimic, the language used must be the one that is adapted to each human situation or condition and the language is impregnated with the cultural or subcultural legacy, prejudices, myths, beliefs and often influenced by passions or hatred.

The societies evolve but many prejudices, taboos, are maintained and are necessary to implement public policies that fight these obstacles of cultural development that is united to the great problem of the discrimination, an age group as important as the older adult, in spite of many efforts still occupy a secondary place in our society, despite its real importance and going against the reality of its great contribution to the nation, and that only a minority are what the language of discrimination calls "old people" in the sense of dependency.

What we think and what we feel will be what our words express and only the one who is convinced of what he says can really influence others, you can not convince anyone if you are not convinced, so you communicate correctly, so too by the need for a process of reflection, and there is a language that is adapted to the reality of the older adult and social attitude, the image of the older adult is slowly changing, is generating a new respect and that new vision, real elderly person, banished by necessity and with basic terms such as old or old, is in some way creating a new reality and that brings us a new language, a new, fairer view of reality.

That is why people who work with older adults should lead and be promoters of a new concept of aging and their words be accompanied by actions and inspire them to know, reflect and love.

Respect is not only not to insult, it is to treat them as older adults who are, as important people, even if they are really vulnerable or with dementia, to express themselves with the elderly with the greatest dignity and consideration. We will analyze the importance of this language, of this great and deserved respect and the image of the older adult today.

The aging process begins well before the age of 60, but it is true that at older age, more discrimination exists and although people over the age of 35 are already discriminated against at work, the perception is that they are "old" a lot later, that vision of what is called old age, considers essentially certain visible physical changes where at that age they are usually more emotional, obviously a superficial vision that scorns the older adult in itself, for its aspect of "old", without considering other variables, in which people they reach a creative, intellectual or artistic development after the barrier estimated above the age of 60, and which are based on a culture that exalts youth, seeing in such old age only decay and end of life.

The aging process is for everyone, but the most obvious discrimination is the older adult, the statistics themselves deny the false perception that the older adult is a decadent, dependent or weak subject. In recent years, there has been an increase in the social participation of the elderly, with various activities that show us learning new things, using modern technological tools, capable of changing their view of things and this new view justifies the fact that let us leave aside the terms of another "reality", of a great persistent myth. Lamentable the role of large mass media that continue to emit images of a weak older person, and shows us as a second class citizen, just as someone who needs help, the typical "old man" of the news.

Claro also show us phenomenal “elders” who are seen as oddities to amuse the public. In our country and safe in many brother countries, almost all journalists refuse to call people aged 60, without leaving the associated language, to a different reality, a language contaminated with a deprecated vision of the reality of the elderly. In a way, in all professions there are vices and what we name here, is stubbornness, a kind of rebellion before what they seem to consider “official language” or tax, for my part there is no official language but correct and this can be varied or to qualify. And in all this that the older adult thinks, in our country they do not like to be called old or old, little by little, self-image evolves, as the new image of the older adult grows. But there is also the low self-esteem of the marginalized, of the despised who will always be low and can accept almost any word that contains contempt, so we have much to do to make the elderly adults more empowered.

Now the terrible manipulation of commercial television offers “what people like,” supposedly no one likes “old”, except to be pitied or laughed at, commercial media underestimate citizens, induce and manipulate the “taste of people”. State institutions and civil organizations carry out various activities promoting older adults and aging, such as educational events, forums, workshops, commemorative events, workshops, and work meetings, but the question is the effectiveness of these activities can have, as far as the idea of promoting, is to influence citizenship to improve the image of the elderly and reduce levels of discrimination and poor attitudes towards older adults, where there are various types of violence, almost “Institutionalized”. The most notorious defects are at the origin of many promoter activities that is the lack of conviction and therefore of mere compliance, many events and groups of activities are made for a small group of representatives or professionals, in an effort to avoid costs, when it is necessary to reach more people and what is also serious, the little importance they give to the diffusion of such events, diffusion before and after realized.

In that sense, promoter activities are absolutely ineffective and serve only as a signal that officials and organizers work and they add compliance bonuses. There are working meetings with interesting speeches, but to which they do not follow conclusions for the taking of concrete actions, and they become a simple exhibition of knowledge or sterile competences as long as an action is not collected from it. It is necessary to create an interinstitutional network that is taken seriously not to make mere exhibitionism of intellectualism or party, but to draw conclusions and actionable plans of action and this requires commitment and perhaps a quota of sacrifice, are promoted and they celebrate laws but they neglect the preventive factor of education and the possibility of an articulate permanent campaign that can really raise awareness and influence.

Promotion without diffusion, is wasting resources and talents, and achieves only inefficiency, which only serves to the applause of the audience and then pure oblivion, and we

must remember that the public is no longer informed as before and the internet media are fundamental to the creation of the permanent campaign, it is not enough to work, you have to prove that you work. If we want to advance faster in the promotion of the elderly, positive aging and gerontological culture, it is necessary not neglect, assertive language, ie honest, direct and clear, as well as respectful and appropriate, say what you think and feel, to impact consciences and to break up perhaps a cold sterile academicism.

Always with the development of societies is accompanied by a certain inertia, which slows down and extinguishes enthusiasm, assertive language is the language of leadership, intelligent and emotional at the same time and therefore is our weapon against the coldness of sterile academicism. Knowing how to express something correctly and passionately at the same time should be the gerontological promoter’s leading weapon, to influence, to convince, using what is usually called emotional intelligence. The true commitment is rational and emotional at the same time, it allows to analyze the receiver of the message, convince, does not impose or threat, so if one has a gerontological vision and real commitment this is his language, and also leaves aside inadequate or outdated terms, to name the people and express new respect for a new vision of aging.

And the misuse of an inadequate gerontological language, in front of the elderly and the community is a gravitating error in the gerontological promoter, together with bad humor and authoritarian gestures, the lack of commitment generates many errors that bring by logic bad results. The Gerontological Promoter must consider as a priority, the crucial issue, the dissemination of promotional activities, promote is to make public the work done for the good of the community and we must know with what means of dissemination we can count. We all know that the commercial media almost totally ignore the older adult theme and gerontology and it is very difficult to access them, when we achieve something of such means is merely occasional, not systematic and do not think that we should blow the bells to fly, and think because I got a note once, it will always be.

We must think about the means that are truly within our reach and that can always be with us, we must keep in mind that preferences and orientations are changing towards the digital world and that technology with its variety of devices puts the internet closer to the people, both because of it and the cheapening of the network costs and the large amount of public that navigates and above all enters the social networks. The traditional media are behind in gerontological information and the internet media generate great alternatives, latelevision, radio can provide programs but the internet generates alternative media, information systems and gerontological information networks, which exceed by hundreds the commercial offer of traditional media.

The idea is for the promoter to maintain contact with the commercial media if possible, but it is time to take the initiative and use the means that are truly available to the citizen and create their spaces in the network, pages, blogs, groups, with a permanent work communicator and linker, join with other pages, groups and blogs, promoters must have public profiles that allow them to go acquiring many friends, followers and contacts, join larger networks and support the small, publishing is always fundamental, choose the publications well according to the objectives drawn, and have the public they wish to have. It is good to have several social networks that are linked to each other, all this will result in an increasing positioning of the institution for which you work, it is not enough to work, you have to prove that you work.

Older people are constantly increasing in the internet and social networks and in a few years will multiply because of the large number of people over 50 who remain online, social networks as spaces of communication between people, have evolved into communities in network, in constant interaction. The social networks allow a tremendous interaction, and a repercussion of the news, comcomientes, shared and the so-called "rebounds", the systematic use of networks to publish news and capture networks tends to increase, while prejudices against social networks lose floor. They are places where we see news, we learn, we entertain and at the same time we communicate, that combination that is not possible in other means, strengthens the great change in progress, the move of the public to the internet media.

The gerontological promoter must polish and revise his communicational tools, his use of the appropriate language, the expression that generates confidence and the ideas must be exposed with clarity and conviction, so that the proposals in favor of the older adult, are accepted, before, by the elderly themselves. Never think of imposing an idea, however brilliant that we believe it to be, we must listen to others and perhaps this idea will develop better and be more successful and viable. It is necessary to achieve consensus and adequately substantiate. Once consensus has been reached, seek a broad participation of others in the implementation, generate a joyful commitment and this will be a success.

When it comes to organizing an event that is commemorative, festive or educational, keep in mind always, that being such an event a promoter activity, it needs an adequate diffusion. Dissemination is a fundamental element for the success of an event and should be an integral part of the plan of this activity, with what means will be counted, since the gerontological promoter should contribute to improving the image of the elderly, influencing people and both must always have a public profile, a communicating attitude and open to information. It is important to establish communication alliances in social networks, with

other institutions and gerontological projects that go in a similar way, the type, style or quality of what you publish will form your audience, unite, interact, connect are actions that do not have loses, the big favors the small and the small to the big, to relate is to grow, isolation is the worst, of work, where little is published, or almost nothing will be no public and the lack of publications will lead to failure the project.

If a gerontological institution has few activities, it is obliged to share interesting information so as not to discourage readers from related themes and interesting for the elderly or their family and professional environment. We have to work seriously the means at our disposal, we review statistics, we must set goals and always have adequate and favorable institutional relationships. Avoid linking with institutions or people with questions, which affect the institutional image and observe transparency in the promotion, be truthful and persevering in dissemination. It is possible to say that the communicating attitude is the opposite of covering up, and must therefore generate confidence, the truth can not be harmful, only the lie is, we are always ready to publish and relate well and with optimism, seriousness and work will be achieved. Objectives of adequately promoting the older adult and the gerontological culture.

There are many who consider that anonymity should be helped and without publicity, many argue in this argument to opt for an anti-communication option that often serves to cover up the lack of work and bad practices. Society, the elderly, need to know, with whom it can count and also have the right to demand transparency from the institutions and this goes also to private organizations. Transparency implies the need to inform about the activities that are carried out, and the sources of financing, it is necessary to know with which people leaders must be visible, the objectives and mission of such institutions must be known and their activities should be consistent with what they propose.

Anyone who speaks in favor of older adults and claims to have a supportive organization on their behalf is bound to have a public profile and a communicating attitude. We need institutions that are positioned, manifest their work and their objectives by the means at our disposal, that make known its name and its leaders. We talked about the proper use of internet media, the fact of having a website or a blog, or both, of having spaces in the main social networks like facebook, twitter, Google +, LinkedIn and Pinterest, a YouTube channel. It is very important that the institution and even those who lead appear in the public light and make themselves known. It is clear that there are also those who make themselves known in a biased way, they advertise focusing on a single place concealing, so it is necessary that there is an attitude of transparency showing their work their sources of financing and resource management, institutions are needed trustworthy with honest leaders.



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DOI: [10.19080/OAJGGM.2017.02.555589](https://doi.org/10.19080/OAJGGM.2017.02.555589)

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