



Sociotechnical Communication in Engineering

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This collection explores why engineering communication constitutes *sociotechnical* communication. Sociotechnical communication acknowledges that engineering communication occurs not in a vacuum but shapes and is shaped by multiple social forces. Through diverse research cases, the authors show how sociotechnical communication disrupts common myths in engineering communication: the myth that communication can be purely technical and neutral, and that data speak for themselves.

The book highlights these myths, considering first how styles, types, and means of sociotechnical communication played pivotal and differing roles in the evolution of wind power technology in Denmark and Germany. The role of myth in engineering blogs is also examined, wherein the effect of engineers maintaining "objective" or "neutral" personae, accentuating technical facts over their social relevance, and eschewing controversy, is to decrease public interest in engineering issues. We see the myths emerge again via product development engineers, whose narrow technical roles constrain their identities and may contribute to constraining their design innovation capacities, in contrast to more holistic, flexible spaces that foster innovation. The myths are also apparent in attempts to facilitate engineering collaboration and knowledge transfer among engineers by bridging the gap between the Millennial-Baby Boomer generational divide.

This book was originally published as a special issue of *Engineering Studies*.

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