

# About Iwona – My Story

by [Iwona Buziak-Mohamed](#) | Apr 8, 2022 | [About me](#)



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## My Background

As an immigrant I understand the difficulties of everyday communication in a culture which not only is new but it is also diverse and everyone around looks and speaks differently. As a visual artist I understand when there is an opportunity to try improving this communication so it becomes easier to deal with life challenges.

I have received traditional training in visual art in Poland and classical animation and illustration in Canada but my passion is in communication and creative problem solving.

## My why

My creative skills combined with my passion for improving life quality through Visual Communication in a Diverse Culture changed the course of my life and it was the reason I started this blog.

Visual communication can help break down language barriers. I want to provide information that would help people make informed decisions about creating visual resources for their clients and employees to improve communication.

## Involvement in the topic

My lifelong passion for art started when I had to create my first postcards at the age of two, which my mom would send to family members for holidays and birthdays.

My upbringing in a Communist Poland where the freedom of speech was suppressed resulted in my serious lack of verbal communication skills.

These were my motivators in choosing the topic of Visual Communication in a Diverse Culture to talk about.

## Level of involvement

For the past several years, I have been a member of **Toastmasters** to learn to communicate confidently and I volunteered many hours for an organization, such as the **Catholic Center for Immigrants** (CCI) which helps newcomers learn basic communication skills.

I have become an English conversation facilitator and a visual aid designer to help organizations and business owners create custom visual aids that can help them improve communication with their clients or employees. My books are examples of such visual aids.



Iwona Buziak-Mohamed – [Books](#) – [hapy.ca](#)

## Motivation

As a creative person, I always look for inspiration and ways to improve life, learn something new and share. I believe that paying more attention to visual language can help:

- Stop wasting your time and money delivering resources that your clients or employees don't understand.

- Create visual supplements to your written resources so your clients or employees can understand.
- Improve Visual Communication in a Diverse Culture by sharing ideas and skills.

Hope for the future

I will be sharing my observations on Visual Communication in a Diverse Culture in my blog and podcast hoping that it may shed some light on the importance of visual communication as a necessary part of communication in general.

Your business depends on relationships with your clients and employees. Your efforts to include visual supplement to your communication will improve your relationships.

## My work as an artist

Working in the visual art field all my life, I was able to navigate through the difficult situations possibly easier than many people I met.

Being adaptable and flexible was always my strength so I had always found work as an artist in various positions but still, my employment opportunities were limited and eventually I had become self-employed.

Artists have a keen eye on observing their environment and a gift to interpret it in their own way. And for me it meant simply surviving the immigration life.

First, I doodled pictures on paper and stuck them everywhere to help me learn the language visually. I wondered then why I could not find visual resources to help people who were not able to go to school in order to deal with daily challenges.

As I grow older, I notice that the people who struggle most and to whom we pay the least attention are the seniors. The market is full of resources for young people and children and these are used for seniors.

Old people don't like to be treated like children. They do need help but the resources they need must be created specifically for their age.

If you are going to talk about bed bugs in an apartment, don't bring a children's story book with three little pigs to a senior just because it has a picture of a house.

I decided to create these kinds of resources for seniors with language barriers because they are the most vulnerable members of our society and the most isolated.

## Visual aids in action

Here are a few examples of what work meant to me, as a visual artist and an Immigrant:

- **The first image below** shows a **Catholic Center of Immigrants** employee and a Senior Program Coordinator, Silvana Valentone, using a visual aid to explain an election to a group of seniors.
- **The second image** shows a Christmas Choir made of a group of seniors during a Christmas Community Lunch, using visual aids to help them celebrate the holidays in a fun and cheerful way.

- **The third image** shows a group of seniors, with myself as a facilitator, gathering around the table. Using visual aids, we talked about body parts and pain. Visual aids used here include illustrations, simple vocabulary and a real stethoscope which helped to encourage the conversation.



Visual aid to explain an election



Visual aid to celebrate holidays



Visual aid to talk about pain

## My invitation to you

If you would like to read or listen to my story about how I started improving my writing and verbal communication skills to help me write this blog, please, go to the next post, titled: A creative outlet to practise communication.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions, I would appreciate your feedback in the comment section below. If you would like to share your story through my blog, please, contact me.



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