1) Integrated marketing communications differs from traditional advertising and promotion because instead of simply just advertising and promoting, IMC incorporates other strategies as well. Besides advertising and promotion, IMC uses direct marketing, interactive marketing, public relations, and personal selling. Marketers are taking the IMC perspective to their advertising and promotional programs because by coordinating their marketing communications efforts, companies can avoid duplication, take advantage of synergy among promotional tools and develop more efficient and effective marketing communications programs.

2) The participants in the integrated marketing communications process are the company advertising the product and the consumer who is targeted in hopes of buying the product. The role of the company is to advertise their product to the consumer to make them want to purchase their product. They want to gain the consumer’s trust and assure them that the product they are buying is worth their money. The consumer’s role is to understand what they are buying and if the company selling the product had its way, to become loyal customers.

3) Marketers of low-involvement products have to use their tools differently than would marketers of high-involvement products. When marketing a high-involvement product it is important to remember that consumers expect to get many years of use out of these products and the promotions team should ensure that the consumer knows it is worth their money. Personal selling and direct marketing is key here, because consumers like being reached out too. For less involved products that include everyday purchases such as toiletries, marketers instead should focus on sales promotions.
The elements of a communication process are source encoding, developing a message, channeling the message, and receiving and decoding the message. Throughout the process, the message will probably experience noise, which is interference of the message from one step to the other. Response is the receiver’s reactions of interpreting the message and their feedback is the part of the response that is communicated back to the sender. An example of a company who is using the communication process is Apple. Their commercial featuring the Mac and PC is the encoding (putting their ideas and information into a symbolic form). Their message is that Mac’s are better than PC’s. The channel that they distribute their message through is nonpersonal and through mass media, via a television commercial. The person watching the message and receiving it is, shockingly, the receiver who decodes the message into their thoughts.

The pros to comparative advertising are greater attention initially, but the ads can often get old. For new brands this strategy is useful because it allows those products to position themselves against the already established brands. Also, brands with a small market share use this approach trying to tap into one of the leader’s markets. The cons to comparative advertising are that the companies that are being advertised against may experience a slight drop in market share, which is of course what the advertiser’s goal is. I believe high profile companies such as Apple, Ford, and Subway, choose to use this approach because they all have one major competitor that shares the market with their product. They figure if they can tarnish their competitor’s reputation, people will buy less of that product and more of theirs.

The hierarchy of effects models can be very effective for establishing communications objectives. These models help to clearly define what the product’s expected market or sales will be. Some marketing and advertising managers believe the problem with these models are that it is too
difficult to translate a sales goal into a specific communications objective and thus these models are not very effective.

7) Creative strategy is determining what an advertising message will say or communicate to a target audience. Creative tactics is the determination of how an advertising message will be implemented so as to execute the creative strategy. In other words, how do you make an ad creative and how will that ad affect the consumer’s opinion of the product. An example of an advertising campaign that has a good creative strategy and creative tactic is Geico. Their campaign featuring a gecko and another featuring cavemen have been extremely popular amongst consumers and their sales have increased quite a bit. Their slogan, “So easy a caveman can do it”, makes the consumer, who may be weary of switching their insurance company, think about how easy the process must be.

8) Pepsi Cola has a relatively new advertising campaign that features the older generation of Pepsi drinkers versus the new ones, to the tune of “Forever Young”. I believe this approach is consistent with the brand’s marketing and advertising objectives because it wants to keep the consumers it has while still attracting new ones. Showing the similarities between the old and new make consumers relate to the product. It reaches to the target audience and allows them to have a personal connection. It does not overwhelm the message that Pepsi is trying to get across. Pepsi made their ads to fit into the environment in which the ad will be shown. For example, they have a commercial that plays during the NFL season featuring old and new football clips and fans drinking their product. This new string of ads has generated much response.