

Prepper's Communication Handbook (Book Review)

Communication is important – both in normal, everyday life and in a SHTF scenario. Suburban homesteaders have the benefit of being nearby people and, often, don't have to worry about being stranded without normal communication equipment functioning. That doesn't mean they can't benefit from Jim Cobb's latest offering, *Prepper's Communication Handbook*.

This book will not only walk you through communication equipment and strategies you may need but also talks about communications methods that will increase your quality of life – both in and outside of disastrous situations.

Book Set-Up

In what has become typical Jim Cobb style, *Prepper's Communication Handbook* is laid out in a concise, intelligent manner. Each chapter is precise in its information and to the point. There's no fluff or extraneous information – “Just the facts, ma'am!”

The chapters are as follows:

Chapter 1 – One-Way Radio: Receivers

Mark Hortsman of Manager Tools (completely non-prepping related, I know...but I do have a real job that I have to work at and improve in) always says “Communication is what the listener does.” In this sense, it makes sense that Jim starts his book with ways to listen to communication. Receivers are an important part of a communication plan and this chapter covers AM/FM, satellite, shortwave and National Oceanic and

Atmospheric (NOAA) or weather radios. Radio scanners are also addressed. Overall, Jim spends a lot of time on how to collect information as opposed to sending, or broadcasting, information.

Chapter 2 – Two-Way Radio

Listening to and gathering information is great, but sometimes you need to interact with people or send out critical information. This point is where two radios come into play.

Jim talks about the power required for different radios and goes in depth on items such as telephones, Citizen Band (CB) radios, Family Radio Service (FRS) and General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) radios and Multi-Use Radio Service (MURS) radios.

Chapter 3 – Amateur Radio

FRS, GMRS and MURS radios are great for local communication, but HAM radio is really where it's at if you want to communicate over long distance. This chapter of *Prepper's Communication Handbook* is dedicated to the HAM radio: licensing information, test taking, local clubs, emergency communication versus normal operation and required equipment.

This topic is so broad that Jim cannot possibly provide everything there is to know about HAM radio in this chapter but he does a great job of setting the stage for further investigation by the reader.

Chapter 4 – Online Communication

We live in a digital world and I would hazard that a majority of our current communication is done online. Jim would be remiss if he didn't devote a significant portion of this book to such things as instant messaging, email, message boards, blogs and the myriad of social media networks out there.

Chapter 5 – Putting Together A Plan

This chapter is where the rubber meets the road, so to speak, for me in this book. All the background information is great, but how do we pull it all together into an actionable plan?

While there's no template to follow, Jim does one better – he provides a structure one should follow and can use to author their own plan. This chapter alone is worth the price of the book.

Chapter 6 – Emergency Business Communications Planning

Think emergency communication only pertains to you and your family? What about your place of business? Corporate emergency communication plans are just as important today as are personal plans. Jim uses this chapter to discuss how and why a plan should be implemented.

Chapter 7 – Codes And Ciphers

It's easy to foresee a situation where you would want to safeguard your communications from prying eyes (or ears, as it were). This chapter of *Prepper's Communication Handbook* explains the differences between codes and ciphers. It also talks about way to safeguard your communications and situations in which you might want to do just that.

Chapter 8 – Essentials For Effective Communication

The next three chapters of *Prepper's Communication Handbook* could just as easily be found in a management training handbook as in a prepper communication handbook. Jim doesn't talk about gear and codes and strategy here. Instead, in this

chapter, he talks about how to increase the effectiveness of your communication by doing things like active listening, not interrupting, giving feedback and tailoring your language for your audience. Sometimes *how* you communicate is just as important as *what* you communicate.

Chapter 9 – Body Language

Body language can tell you a lot about a person. Are they telling the truth? Lying? Are they defensive? This chapter is useful in understanding certain “tells” in body language and may also be used to help you learn how not to have these tells if you’re put in certain situations.

Chapter 10 – Conflict Resolution

Strategies for conflict resolution such as concession, consensus, mediation, arbitration, compromise, collaboration, and competition are discussed. Jim also suggests some tips for conflict resolution in a leadership role.

Final Thoughts Section

Jim summarizes the books and gives a few parting shots of wisdom.

Resources Section

As with most books on this topic, *Prepper’s Communication Handbook* is gear and information heavy. Jim outlines a bunch of recommended resources – both knowledge-based and hardware – in this section.

Why I Liked *Prepper's Communication Handbook*

As you might have noticed by now, Jim has a basic style when he writes a book. There's solid information provided in a no-BS kind of way. In addition, the topic of communication is very broad and can be quite confusing. Jim does a good job of providing introductions that allow the reader to continue a self-study off of.

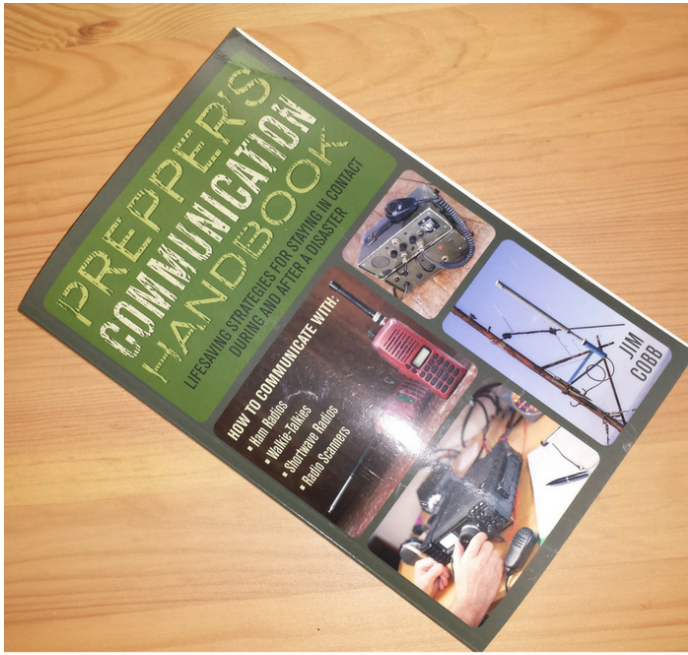
What I Didn't Like

What I didn't like about this book was the same thing I liked – it's high level. If you're looking for communication plan templates and the like, this isn't the book for you. This book is more of a “teach a man to fish” kind of book.

Overall Thoughts on *Prepper's Communication Handbook*

I think *Prepper's Communication Handbook* by Jim Cobb is a solid addition to your long-term survival library. The book is not just a gear guide but talks about communication methods and theory – both of which are important in stressful situations that preppers may face.

Disclaimer: Jim Cobb supplied a copy of *Prepper's Communication Handbook* for me to review. I can assure my readers that I gave it a fair and honest review.



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