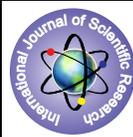


The Power of Success : Non Verbal Communication



Literature

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ABSTRACT

"The most important thing in communication is to hear what isn't being said"- Peter. F. Dracker.

Numerous articles and books have been written on the importance of Non Verbal Communication. Some studies suggest that from 60 to 90% of a message's effect comes from non verbal cues. They are highly effective in achieving their purpose. Researchers have found that even in spoken messages, the listener perceives non verbal communication as more important than the words. Now, more and more writers on the subject of business communication are stressing the importance of non verbal communication. This paper therefore presents a brief overview of non verbal communication, that how by using body language we can make our communication successful, where we commit mistakes during non verbal communication and how to overcome these and improve non verbal communication.

NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Good communication is the foundation of successful relationships, both personally and professionally. Effective communication is not one-way. It does not just involve information dissemination. Effective communication facilitates respectful and positive human connections. But we communicate with much more than words. In fact, research shows that the majority of our communication is nonverbal. Nonverbal communication, or body language, includes our facial expressions, gestures, eye contact, posture, and even the tone of our voice. Non-verbal communications is usually understood as the process of communication through sending and receiving wordless messages. Language is not the only means of communication. Other means of non-verbal communications are style of clothes, hairstyles, architecture, symbols and info graphics. However, nonverbal elements of speech are paralanguage that includes voice quality, emotion and speaking style. A dance is also considered as a non-verbal communication, as well as written texts such as handwriting style, spatial arrangement of words or the use of emotions

The ability to understand and use nonverbal communication is a powerful tool that will help you connect with others, express what you really mean, navigate challenging situations, and build better relationships at home and work

The power of nonverbal communication and body language

Nonverbal communication, or body language, is a vital form of communication. When we interact with others, we continuously give and receive countless wordless signals. All of our nonverbal behaviors—the gestures we make, the way we sit, how fast or how loud we talk, how close we stand, how much eye contact we make—send strong messages. The way you listen, look, move, and react tell the other person whether or not you care and how well you're listening. The nonverbal signals you send either produce a sense of interest, trust, and desire for connection—or they generate disinterest, distrust, and confusion.

Nonverbal communication is a rapidly flowing back-and-forth process. Successful nonverbal communication depends on emotional self-awareness and an understanding of the cues you're sending, along with the ability to accurately pick up on the cues others are sending you. This requires full concentration and attention. If you are planning what you're going to say next, daydreaming, or thinking about something else, you are almost certain to miss nonverbal cues and other subtleties in the conversation. You need to stay focused on the moment-to-moment experience in order to fully understand what's going on.

Nonverbal communication cues can play five roles:

- **Repetition:** they can repeat the message the person is making verbally.
- **Contradiction:** they can contradict a message the individual is trying to convey.
- **Substitution:** they can substitute for a verbal message. For example, a person's eyes can often convey a far more vivid

message than words and often do

- **Complementing:** they may add to or complement a verbal message. A boss who pats a person on the back in addition to giving praise can increase the impact of the message
- **Accenting:** they may accent or underline a verbal message. Pounding the table, for example, can underline a message.

Tips for successful nonverbal communication:

- **Take a time out if feeling overwhelmed by stress.** Stress compromises ones ability to communicate. When a person is stressed out, he's more likely to misread other people, send off confusing or off-putting nonverbal signals, and lapse into unhealthy knee-jerk patterns of behavior. Take a moment to calm down before jump back into the conversation. Once regained the emotional equilibrium, will be better equipped to deal with the situation in a positive way.
- **Pay attention to inconsistencies.** Nonverbal communication should reinforce what is being said. If one get the feeling that someone isn't being honest or that something is "off" it may be picking up on a mismatch between verbal and nonverbal cues. Is the person is saying one thing, and their body language something else? For example, are they telling "yes" while shaking their head no?
- **Look at nonverbal communication signals as a group.** Don't read too much into a single gesture or nonverbal cue. Consider all of the nonverbal signals sending and receiving, from eye contact to tone of voice and body language. Are the nonverbal cues consistent—or inconsistent—with what one is trying to communicate?

Nonverbal communication and body language: Common mistakes and remedies

- Be objective about own observations to make sure that aren't offending others by broadly mimicking their speech or behavior. Most people instinctively send and interpret nonverbal signals all the time, so don't assume that no one is aware of nonverbal undercurrents. Finally, stay true to yourself. Be aware of own natural style, and don't adopt behavior that is incompatible with it.
- Thinking one can bluff by deliberately altering the body language can do more harm than good. Unless one is a proficient actor, it will be hard to overcome one's body's inability to lie. There will always be mixed messages, signs that your channels of communication are not congruent. It's a prime example of leakage, and something others will detect, one way or another.
- Incorrect accusations based on erroneous observations can be embarrassing and damaging and take a long time to overcome. Always verify your interpretation with another communications channel before rushing in. You could say something like, "I get the feeling you're uncomfortable with this course of action. Would you like to add something to the discussion?" This should draw out the real message and force the individual to come clean or to adjust his or her body language.

Suggested Ways for Improving nonverbal communication skills

To improve nonverbal communication skills, one need to figure out where there is room for improvement. The most effective method is to observe oneself in his own action:

- **Video camera** – Videotape a conversation between two partners. Set the camera to record both of them at the same time, so they can observe the nonverbal back-and-forth. When watch the recording, focus on any discrepancies between verbal and nonverbal communication.
- **Digital camera** – Ask someone to take a series of photos of two partners while talking to someone else. As look through the photos, focus on body language, facial expressions, and gestures.
- **Audio recorder** – Record a conversation between one’s and a friend or family member. As listen to the recording afterwards, concentrate on the way things are said, rather than the words. Pay attention to tone, timing, pace, and other sounds.

While watching or listening to the recordings, ask the following questions, which help in evaluating nonverbal communication skills:

Eye contact	Is this source of connection missing, too intense, or just right in yourself or in the person you are looking at?
Facial expression	What is your face showing? Is it masklike and unexpressive, or emotionally present and filled with interest? What do you see as you look into the faces of others?
Tone of voice	Does your voice project warmth, confidence, and delight, or is it strained and blocked? What do you hear as you listen to other people?
Posture and gesture	Does your body look still and immobile, or relaxed? Sensing the degree of tension in your shoulders and jaw answers this question. What do you observe about the degree of tension or relaxation in the body of the person you are speaking to?
Touch	Remember, what feels good is relative. How do you like to be touched? Who do you like to have touching you? Is the difference between what you like and what the other person likes obvious to you?
Intensity	Do you or the person you are communicating with seem flat, cool, and disinterested, or over-the-top and melodramatic? Again, this has as much to do with what feels good to the other person as it does with what you personally prefer.
Timing and pace	What happens when you or someone you care about makes an important statement? Does a response—not necessarily verbal—come too quickly or too slowly? Is there an easy flow of information back and forth?
Sounds	Do you use sounds to indicate that you are attending to the other person? Do you pick up on sounds from others that indicate their caring or concern for you?

The point of this exercise is to develop one’s nonverbal awareness. As continue to pay attention to the nonverbal cues and signals person send and receive, his ability to communicate will improve.

Communicating Confidence Nonverbally

Nonverbal communication which is more frequently but narrowly referred to as body language, is a universally overlooked area to improve confidence in communication and general self-perception. The majority of people aim to build their confidence but rarely consider the power of communicating confidence nonverbally. To improve confidence one need to apply few tips.

Person need to have high self-awareness in order to be aware of body language. It’s a matter of knowing what to do in certain situations. When one has a poor body language others can see fear in him.

Here are four examples of body language that is counter-productive in developing confidence and how one can solve them to not only communicate more powerfully but to internalize the confidence:

1. Moving eye contact - people with low confidence levels rarely make eye contact. When they do, as soon as the other person returns the eye contact the person looks away. One do not look silly looking the other person in the eyes. In fact, look weirder and would be annoying the other person more so when one do not make eye contact.

Good eye contact will show the person you are listening and that you are interested in what they have to say. However, you can have too much of a good thing. Excessive eye contact is non-verbal aggression. Dr. Peter Andersen, author of *The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Body Language*, says you will make the other person feel comfortable with about 60% eye contact.

2. Weak touch - otherwise known as haptics, touch involves bodily contact. The haptics we are interested in to develop confident nonverbal communication is mostly the handshake. People will rarely use any other haptics other than a handshake in a normal social situation. It’s not as if one normally go around patting people on the back or stroking their arm. That’s just strange!

What did you feel when someone shook you’re hand with a soft handshake? You wondered if they cared about you or if they lacked confidence. A good handshake depends on the receiving person. Most of the time you want a firm handshake, but occasionally with say, the elderly, you don’t want to be crushing their hand! When greeting ladies be aware that they don’t have gigantic and hard hands like many men so just go a little less firm. Nonetheless, do not be soft. A firm handshake shows you care and is an initial way of communicating confidence when meeting someone.

3. Stay away - body positions relative to one another is otherwise known as proxemics. What I mean by “relative to one another” is the distance between you and the other person. You are most comfortable with an intimate or well known person being close to you as opposed to someone you just met. However, people with low confidence will have a much wider radius of comfort. A more confident person will not show fear when someone “breaks” their comfortable proxemics. This doesn’t mean they are comfortable with the closeness, it just means they don’t show their lack of comfort. They desire the other person to stay away, but they cope with the situation.

4. Carry yourself - The other nonverbal communication skill which is valuable in developing confidence is kinesics. It involves body movement. Possibly the most important kinesics in confidence is posture. A slouched posture not only screams a lack of confidence, but it has a physical and psychological effect on the person with the poor posture. The physical effect of slouching shoulders forward is a compressed chest. Chest compressing simulates expelling air which causes shallow breathes. This means if one has poor posture one will have poor breathing. The psychological effect of poor posture is poorer confidence. Using the world’s best golfer, Tiger Woods, as an example, he’s taught to maintain good posture as he approaches each shot. By having good posture he is able to breathe correctly and physically get his body into the right state of confidence. From this his mind is able to focus on the shot ahead.

If player lose this state of confidence through poor posture, the affects are surprisingly strong. The player’s chest begins to tighten and everything heightens. They then lose their state of control, calmness, and confidence causing poor performance.

The same relates to everyday life. To practice a confident posture, roll your shoulders forward, upwards, and then back down to almost complete a circle. Watch your shoulders as you rotate them and if they are behind to what they were prior to doing the activity and you are comfortable, you've done the activity correctly.

Having learned about these areas of nonverbal communication, all that's left to do is practice new skills. Do not make the mistake of no action. One's self development will not progress forward until he move forward. By adopting the suggested ways practice confident nonverbal communication skills.

Conclusion:

The field of nonverbal communications has grown rapidly over the last few decades, and it has applications in business, media,

international relations, education, and indeed any field which significantly involves interpersonal and group dynamics. Non-verbal communication skills give expression to our messages that we are transmitting to be received as a communication. To be proficient with our non-verbal communication skills we must take note how we project in the way we look as well as the way we say things. Our body language must match our words so the listener can receive our message correctly. If we do not match in our non-verbal communication with our verbal communication that there is sure to be misunderstanding between ourselves and the one we are communicating to. Improve this skill and see its importance.

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