

# The three main areas of non verbal communication



**Personal:** involves various kinds of non verbal behavior unique to one person. The meaning is also unique to the person sending the message, for example a person may laugh due to nervousness or fear , while another may cry these responses non verbally communicate discomfort. A person might bite his nails in anticipation or walk to n fro in state of confusion.

**Cultural:** Characteristic of a group of people, it is learned unconsciously by observing others in the society or a group. In different cultures individuals tend to behave in a unique way according to their upbringing and culture . For example nowadays in few parts of India if a boy and girl are dating each other and they walk hand in hand, it would be a big taboo in the society whereas in the western culture its quite normal. In our culture body language plays a vital role , traditionally to welcome someone into our homes we hold our hands together and bow down our heads , to show they are welcomed into our house and they would be treated equal to their gods . Another bright example would be , when Indians nod their head sideways as a “ yes” it would seem as a “ no” and use the same signal as “ no” which in fact gets people all over the world confused.

**Universal :** Behavior that is common to human kind. It shows happiness, sadness or deep-seated feelings . Universally speaking its accepted in all the cultures where when a person speaks in a low tone generally shows respect towards the other person and when a person speaks in a high tone of voice it usually means commanding or disrespectful in other occasions.

## 2. Classification of Non-verbal communications

Kinesics: is the study of non-verbal communication achieved by movement of the body. Example facial expressions (mouth and eyes are the two indicators of emotion) and Posture and Gesture (movement of arms, hands head, feet and legs), winking your eye at someone would be sending out a signal of mischief or raising both your eyebrows would show that you have not understood a message or a state of confusion or it could be with the mouth, your happiness could be brought forward with a smile or a frown can clearly show your sadness.

Proxemics: is the study of communication with aspects of physical distances (space) between individuals. In simple words proximity means nearness. There are lot of factors where space would play as an important factor for communication some of them are status , roles , culture, gender and age. It would be smart if an individual knows as to how much space he/she has to maintain while communicating with the other person for example it would be quite awkward to stand right in front of your boss while he/she is addressing.

Haptics: Communication based on sense of touch. For example stroking, hitting , holding , handshake or patting. By sense of touch you could send variety of messages , a nice and firm hand shake would mean that the other person is really expected and welcomed, where as a strong hand shake would definitely mean dominance . A pat on the shoulder to a male colleague would mean encouragement and the same to a female colleague would definitely mean sexual harassment these days.

Oculesics: communication regarding usage of eye , its a very common thing as we as human beings judge a person at his/her first appearance and how

physical appearance really matters for example when a man is meeting a woman he instantly judge her completely based on her appearance and the women too would see how the man is dressed or his shoes , this type of communication is completely based on outward appearance.

Environment: it can influence the outcomes of communication and it eases up people and match their expectations be it at an office or a regular bar. For example organizations give full consideration to the office space its layout, sales area , ergonomics and many more things to create an environment where one would feel its solace and blend in.

3. A communication effectively used for decoding a message through a sender and a receiver without any use of words is known as non verbal communication, this form of communication tends to be unconscious and often reveals the sender's feeling and preferences more spontaneously and honestly than the verbal form of communication, few examples of non verbal communication are ,

Facial expressions

Body language

Tone of voice

Gestures

Behaviors

Every culture has its own uniqueness of non verbal communication involved in it , As for me hailing from India few of the communication methods could be effectively seen such as,

Facial expressions: part of kinesics which involves communication involving expressions through mouth and eyes which indicate various emotions. In India facial expressions play an important role, one could notice it in everyday life , for example in south of India Kerala there is a famous form of ballet / opera / dance known as kathakali which is based completely on facial expressions , in a traditional Indian family is a wife has to call her husband from a rendezvous amongst his friends , she would not call him by his name or send somebody to call him , she would partially hide behind the curtain wait till she catches his eyes and signal him to come inside.

Body language: This form of non verbal communication usually involves gestures by physical ability as simple as waving your hand to bid good bye to someone which is universally known or waving both the hands to say “ no” . As per my experience goes , every move of yours is thoroughly judged at a point of interview when u lean forward it shows you are genuinely interested and when your posture is more relaxed it clearly shows you are not paying enough attention or not interested.

Tone of voice : This form of non verbal communication purely depends on an individual's intrapersonal skills, how well he/she is able to communicate , tone of voice sends out clear message if the person on the other end is clearly appreciated or not.

India has been a male dominated country right from history, so the head of the house is always the male person , An Indian wife would always speak in a low tone of voice to show respect for her spouse and her submission towards him . A son/ daughter too would behave in the same manner , speaking in high tone of voice would show utter disrespect to the head of the house. When a teacher speaks in the class no student would speak up even outside the class of school premises the student always shows respect to their teachers by maintaining a low tone of voice.

**Gestures :** This form of non verbal communication clearly deals with gestures - gestures according to the dictionary simply means - “ A motion of the limbs or body made to express or help express thought or to emphasize speech.”

As India is a multi ethnic , multi cultural and a country with many religions has a varied effect on the people and their behavior. Simply to greet a relative or a close friends Muslims in our country simply hug the other person three times from right to left shoulder and then left to right shoulder where as another dominant religion Hinduism the younger person touches the feet of the elder person to seek his good will or blessings.

**Behaviors:** According to the dictionary the very meaning explains us that it is the actions or reactions of a person or animal in response to external or internal conditions and according to one's behaviors we could clearly understand the message he/she is trying to communicate.

In our culture one's character is always judged by his/her behavior, for example we personalize with everyone very easily, imagine if a cab driver is

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little elderly we would straight away call him uncle , if he is comparatively younger we would call him brother . In another example just to show respect for elders whenever they walk into the room , everybody stands up and welcomes them.

4. As a HRM manager recruiting for finance manager position I would prepare myself with these following questions,

### **Open**

What qualities according to you should a good finance manager possess ?

### **Close**

If you are selected for this position, would you be able to join immediately ?

### **Probing**

Could you narrate an incident where you have handled a crisis effectively as a finance manager ?

5. Active listening : communication at its best to help others understand the problem or a situation from an individuals point of view. An active listener has empathy with the speaker. Active listening often involves the use of confirmation , rejection or disconfirmation.

Active listening in a business environment is quite essential right for example, right from the basics of an interview the interviewer would notice how much of an active listener you are , a sign of active listening would definitely be of what we spoke of earlier , body language , gesture and behavior. In a business setting every one has to coordinate with each other , a simple message of urgency could be passed through number of employees

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and if anyone of them is not paying enough of attention the would message and its meaning would change till it reaches at the other end.

Imagine customer service for an instance and grieved customer calling the support team to tell about his issues regarding the product and if the representative is not actively tuned to the conversation , the whole point of customer service is lost and it would definitely leave the customer more infuriated. In a sales scenario if a customer has ordered for 30 packages and the employee has understood it as 13 , it would lead into utter chaos these factors would majorly impact the business and finally it has a bright chance of getting shut. The main factor of active listening are

acknowledgment

empathize

clarity

acknowledgment : The act of admitting or owning to something . If a person is trying to communicate a message acknowledge the fact that you have understood or comprehended verbally or non verbally (face to face situation).

Empathize : accepting the emotional dimensions of a message. For ex: I understand how u feel about this ! ....

Clarity : If a person is unclear in his attempt to send a message across , it is not wrong to politely ask that person to clarify his stand or repeat the sentence again . This would avoid any confusion or misunderstanding.



6. The six thinking hats concept has been designed to improve thinking effectiveness and how an individual can utilise them in negotiations are,

facts and information : An individual at this stage should be gaining knowledge about the company and its payment to the employees as in does it pay well or not , based on that the individual could expect.

feelings and emotions : Should be able to express his/her willingness to join the team or the company , so it should seem that the candidate is genuine for the pay he/she is expecting.

critical judgment : this is where the interviewers come up with the counter strategy , building up anxiety expressing things like , the market is pretty dull cant expect more etc but as a negotiation scenario one should stand up as per the expectations.

Positive: This is where an individual has to be promising , it is a situation completely opposite to critical judgment , its a reply to that hat .

New ideas: It is based around the idea of provocation and thinking for the sake of identifying new possibilities. This is often carried out on critical judgment statements in order to identify how to get past the barriers or failings identified, in other words as said earlier the individual has to be promising.

Big picture: This stage is where one has to rethink as to what have we done so far? and question what can we do next? In simple words just analyze the situation.

All these steps would definitely help in successful negotiation.

7. Feedback we get to hear this word quite often, it simply means response to an inquiry. In today's entire business setting feedback is quite essential. It can be noticed from two different point of views from the company's and the customer's perspective. Feedback has two important factors, self assessment - making your own judgment about your performance and contribution to the teams work. Peer assessment - receive feedback from team members. Feedback can be of two kinds positive and negative. Positive feedback is something received when a task has been completed exceptionally well and negative feedback means something has been done which is not up to the expectations and needs to be improved.

A company launches a product which has never been produced by any another companies and it is quite new in the market, how would one know if the product is wanted and is in demand, the answer is feedback . When the product enters the market through a big advertising campaign customer's would get attracted to it and finally buy it, if the customer wants more of it, he would order it again in this cycle we would know that the product is in demand and if it is not much in demand then the company would request the customer and enquire what lacks in that product and when the customer replies to the company about the product it would be a feedback.

An employee at the same firm who has been working hard and diligently known for his work receives an appreciation, this too can be a form of feedback. This in fact could encourage the employee to sustain his performance or even improve which in fact would help the productivity in the

company (positive feedback) , on the other hand if the employee is little slow and not hard working if he/she gets a notice that improvement is needed or hard work needed then the employee would know what he needs to do (constructive feedback). Negative feedback is easy to understand it could be a termination letter.

Feedback then is very important for a company if it needs to change or prosper.

8. Assertiveness meaning positive it is a kind of constructive and helpful behavior when an issue arises , this for of communication is a way if dealing with issues if unfair use of power and gaining respect and recognition. Standing up for your rights and expressing what you believe , feel and want in direct, honest and appropriate ways that respects the right of the other person.

The four steps which would help me become an effective manager are

Set limits - have a bottom line and be treated with respect

expect to be fairly rewarded for work

be comfortable with ourselves

have our health and safety considered

have our needs considered.

Refusals:

say no to requests that are unreasonable, unfair or beyond what is expected in our job without feeling guilty.

Be direct , clear and honest.

Persistence or broken CD technique

You have clear views and can justify your viewpoint.

Making requests.

Ask for what you want .

Set the tone.

Be relevant : communicate about what is relevant.

References: Written notes and lecturer hand outs from the business communication class.

[www.thinkexist.com](http://www.thinkexist.com) and [www.freedictionary.com](http://www.freedictionary.com).