

Verbal and nonverbal messages

Business



Introduction According to Verderber, Verderber, & Sellnow (2011), communication involves two components, verbal and nonverbal messaging. The verbal messages are usually intended and they include the precise words chosen and spoke in the communication process. Nonverbal messages on the other hand are inevitable and often send unintended or intended meanings. For example, the moving up and down of ones arms during communication can serve either an illustrative or a distractive meaning. Verderber et al., (2011) argues that nonverbal messages when used effectively can help to clarify whatever is being conveyed verbally. Often than not, this has never been the case since verbal and nonverbal messaging have ended up contradicting each other. This paper explores how both verbal and nonverbal messages can complement and contradict one another. Verbal and Nonverbal Messages Complementing One Another Verderber et al., (2011), has argued that the effective use of nonverbal messages helps to clarify whatever is verbally conveyed.

These authors further assert that nonverbal messages are the major conveyors of emotions and whenever a person listens to a message conveyed in the communication process, he or she bases his interpretation of the feelings or emotions on the nonverbal message conveyed. Tough nonverbal messages are inevitable and cannot be controlled as such, they can be used to effectively complement verbal messages in a number of ways. These ways in Verderber et al., (2011) view are the use of; kinesics or body, vocalics or voice proxemics or space, and chronemics or time. In communicating a verbal message, kinesics or the body motion movements has the most effective tool to emphasis the verbal message conveyed.

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From my own experience, I have found making use of gestures by moving my arms up and down to emphasize a point in line with what I am saying, to be more effective. This moving of arms up and down is more effective in emphasizing the verbal message of giving a direction or illustrating whatever is being said. Verbal and Nonverbal Messages Contradicting One Another Verderber et al., (2011) assert that nonverbal messaging in a communication is usually inevitable and sometimes occurs unconsciously without the knowledge or intention of the message conveyor. In these instances, nonverbal messages have contradicted verbal messages to an extent of totally changing the intended meaning. From my own experience, when a person raises his finger without uttering anything and places it vertically across his lips, the message he conveys is “ shut up” or “ keep quiet”.

In the real sense the intended meaning might be different from the keeping quiet meaning conveyed. Another example of how verbal and nonverbal messaging contradicts can be seen in the case of eye contact. Studies show that women tend to value eye contact more than men during communication, and whenever the man fails to maintain an eye contact he is perceived to be lying. From my experience, the man may not be lying and could actually be telling the truth, and the avoidance of eye contact could be due to shyness or strict cultural upbringing where eye contact with women is not the norm. In this process, the message that this man is communicating verbally contradicts what he is conveying non-verbally to the female receiver. Another example can be between a child and his parent, where the child speaks to his father while looking down and avoiding eye contact.

The father could assert that the child has done some mischief, while to the child it is a show of respect not to look at your father directly in the eyes, and therefore messages intended and conveyed are misinterpreted.

Conclusion In conclusion, verbal and nonverbal messages can be used to complement or contradict one another. When the nonverbal message is used effectively, it can reinforce the verbal message being conveyed, but when used inappropriately or unintentionally it can totally distort the meaning of the message being conveyed.