

Case study



Information 01 October 2009 Case Study John Andrews was faced with the unfortunate event of experiencing multiple non-verbal clues that led him to develop a clear understanding of Martha Gillespie's purpose for having the meeting with him at 10: 00am one morning. First of all, non-verbal clues provide the recipient with body language, actions or behaviors that have implied meanings behind their execution. The first of the many non-verbal clues was the fact that the buyer for Skaggs Manufacturing, Ms. Gillespie, was 20 minutes late to the office for their 10: 00am appointment, and it took her another 10 minutes to bring Andrews into her office to discuss the sales pitch. Typically, a client that is very serious about purchasing a new product, a new line, or a development package is usually going to be on time to the meeting and show the salesperson as much respect as possible in hopes that they can ease down the price of the products with their charm and good will. At 10: 20am another non-verbal clue took place when another salesperson that was Andrews' competitor walked into the office for a 10: 30am appointment. Not only was the buyer for Skaggs Manufacturing tardy for their meeting, but she already had another salesperson scheduled for an immediate meeting right after Andrews. Gillespie also showed many counts of blatant disrespect toward Andrews. For one, there was a 10 minute period where she was discussing a tennis match for that day with the secretary instead of concentrating on who was there for a scheduled appointment. Finally, as Andrews began to speak with Gillespie in her office she gave him no attention, no eye contact and was focused on reading letters from her desk instead of what he had to say. The final sign of disrespect came when she answered the phone in the middle of their meeting and began talking with her husband for another 10 minutes until she finally saw the frustration

on Andrews' face. Each of these non-verbal clues was blatant hints that Andrews was not going to be able to earn the business of Skaggs Manufacturing that morning and he had definitely wasted his time.

If I was John Andrews, I would have likely performed many of the same behaviors that he did. He kept calm during many different frustrating events where he was being blatantly ignored and disrespected by the buyer for Skaggs Manufacturing. Still, his job is to sell the product, so it is important to maintain an aura of professionalism and do his best to earn the customer's business. Unfortunately, he was never able to actually give a sales pitch or tell Gillespie anything about their product line or what the company had to offer. She made it very clear that it was a higher priority for Skaggs Manufacturing to see his competition in a meeting rather than him.

At this point, I would have continued to show as much professionalism as possible and I would have given her my business card and attempted to reschedule the meeting for another time. It is likely that similar treatment would have been given a second time around, or Gillespie would completely disregard the request and show me out the door. However, at least the attempt was made. Perhaps the non-verbal clues were misread and Gillespie was just very busy with her day and the brief 10 minutes she took to discuss tennis with her secretary and talk with her husband on the phone were the only time she had available for free time. Sometimes a lack of time is the unfortunate consequence of doing good business, so it would be my job to make sure that I received a clear " No" response from Ms. Gillespie before I completely gave up on the account altogether.