

The Power of Non-verbals



The non-verbal component is one of the least understood parts of interpersonal communication. What's surprising about that is the non-verbal channel has about five times as much impact as the verbal channel. People everywhere communicate with their entire bodies, not just with words and sentences.

The risk you take by not understanding non-verbals is you can totally misinterpret what other people actually mean when you are talking to them. People don't always mean what they say or say what they mean. You also risk sending conflicting, even offensive, non-verbal signals to others. Sales have been lost, careers aborted, and nations toppled by not knowing how to read and send the right non-verbals. Can you afford to take the risk?

The power of non-verbals lies in what is known as the congruence factor. Without realizing it, we are always on alert for congruence, or lack of it, when communicating with other people. Congruence is what tells us whether we believe the other person is telling the truth and can be trusted. Consciously or sub-consciously, we watch and listen to see if words and body action agree.

A good example of a lack of congruence occurred a few years ago when a future Hall of Fame baseball player was accused of betting on baseball games while still playing and coaching. Die-hard baseball fans still remember an interview in which he was asked if he could assure the public that he had never bet on games while still on active duty. His response was emphatic that he never had.

If the sound of his voice didn't give him away, the fact that he rubbed his nose while he said it did. People who understand the power of non-

verbals know that the nerves at the end of the nose tingle when we lie. To the knowing eye, Pete Rose had telegraphed that he was lying and that he had indeed bet on baseball. Later, he admitted that he had.

The Power of Non-Verbals is a half-day of training that helps you learn how to recognize the non-verbals others use and what they mean. It also shows you how to make sure you're sending the right signals to others.

To make sure you get it all, we use a lot of real-world examples of both congruence and non-congruence. They help you recognize non-verbal signals when you see them. We also break non-verbals down into six types, to make it even easier to recognize them and be more aware of what you're "saying."

Territories and space

Everyone has a need for personal space. The

amount of space a person desires can depend on where the person happens to be. It can even vary by gender and nationality. Violating personal space makes people feel uncomfortable and will even cause some people to flee.

Hands and arms

If hands and arms could talk, you would be amazed at how much they would say. In fact, they do talk; they just don't use words. Palm gestures, handshakes, hand motions and the position of a person's arms tell you a lot about what they are thinking.

Feet and legs

The position of a person's feet and legs give strong clues about what he or she is thinking, or may be about to do. These tend to be among the more subtle clues people give, but among the most powerful. They indicate red light, green light or caution. Knowing which signal a person is giving can make the difference in winning a client or a sale and losing out.

Eyes and head

The eyes have it. Nothing tells you what a person is thinking more than the eyes. The same is true for the person(s) you are speaking to. And subtle head gestures give strong clues about how a person is evaluating what you are saying.

Total body

Body pointing can tell you a lot about a person's attitude and whether the timing is right to press for a decision. There can also be a big difference in body gesturing between men and women. Get it right and things can go well. Get it wrong and they can go badly.

Objects and space

The types of objects people use and the way they use them can also tell a lot about a person's attitude toward you and what you are saying. Seating position says a lot about the kind of outcome a person expects and will eventually receive. When you control the room, you want to make sure seating is arranged to your advantage. When someone else controls it, you need to know how to gain as much of an advantage as you can.

Whether you are an executive, a salesperson, a manager or a professional, you need to know how to recognize and send powerful non-verbals.

The Power of Non-Verbals Takeaways

- Become aware of the different types of non-verbal messages people send and how to interpret them.
- Learn how to make sure the non-verbals you send to others strengthen and clarify what you say.
- Know how to interpret "non-verbal clusters" and keep from being fooled by them.
- Understand the power of non-verbals and know how to "read" them to validate what people say.
- Know which non-verbals are used most often and are the most critical to understanding what people really mean.

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