



Non-Verbal Communication


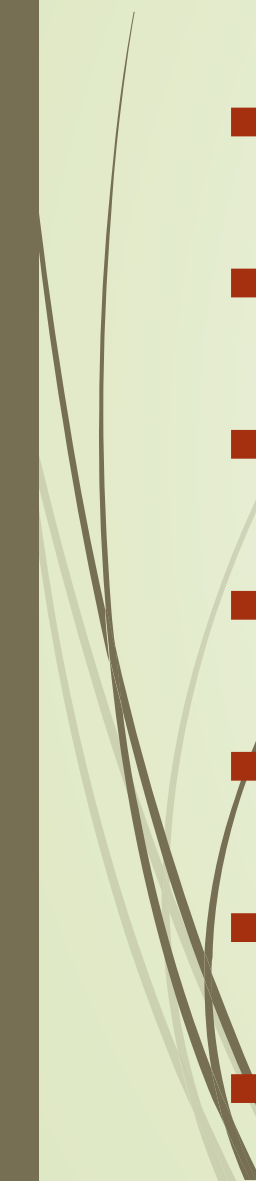
Deepshikha Mehra

What?

- “Non-verbal communication refers to sending and receiving of wordless messages conveyed through such means as gestures, body movements, facial expressions, tones of voice, colours, space and style of dressing” - Shalini Verma, *Business Communication*
- **Seven components**
- Body language
- Kinesic communication
- Proxemic communication
- Haptic communication
- Paralinguistic communication
- Chromatic communication
- Chronomatic communication



Body language

- 
- 
- It is the non-verbal or outward reflection of the emotions
 - Reinforce your verbal message
 - May contradict and reveal true thoughts
 - Vital to workplace
 - Client – happy/unhappy
 - Manager/supervisor – happy with work done/or otherwise
 - Team members – cooperative or not



Components

1. Eye contact

- Powerfull to convey a message immediately
- To ignore someone or to give importance
- Warn or convey
- To build trust
- Varies from culture to culture – USA (sign of trustworthiness)
– Asian countries – rude, offensive, can start a fight
- Too much – unsettling
- Difference between staring and eye contact

Common interpretations of eye contact at workplace

- Too much – indicating domination, superiority, lack of respect, threatening attitude, desire to insult
- Too little – not paying attention, impolite, insincere, dishonest, shy
- Withdrawing eye contact – submission
- When engaged in interesting conversation – eyes focused on speaker 80% time – the direction of gaze can waver in between
- Three types – formal, informal, personal

2. Facial Expression

- “Refer to certain movements of the facial muscles that facilitates the non-verbal communication of emotions”
- Partly instinctive, partly taught, partly imitative – some universal – smile, frown
- **Six basic human expressions/emotions:**
 - Happiness
 - Sadness
 - Surprise
 - Anger
 - Disgust
 - Fear

3. Head position and movement

- **Head positions – three:**
- straight /head up – positive or haughty
- Down – critical evaluation, humility, submission, depression
- Tilted – interested, pointing
- Ideal – tilted
- **Head movement – two –**
- Head shake and nod –no and yes, respectively
- Bringing head closer – intellectual and emotional closeness




Kinesic Communication

What?

- Origin – Ray – L Birdwhistell - *Kine* – smallest observable unit of body movement
- He defined Kinesics as “the study of body-motion as related to non-verbal aspects of inter-personal communication”
- **Three types**
 - Hand and leg positions
 - Body movements
 - Body postures and gait

Hand and leg positions

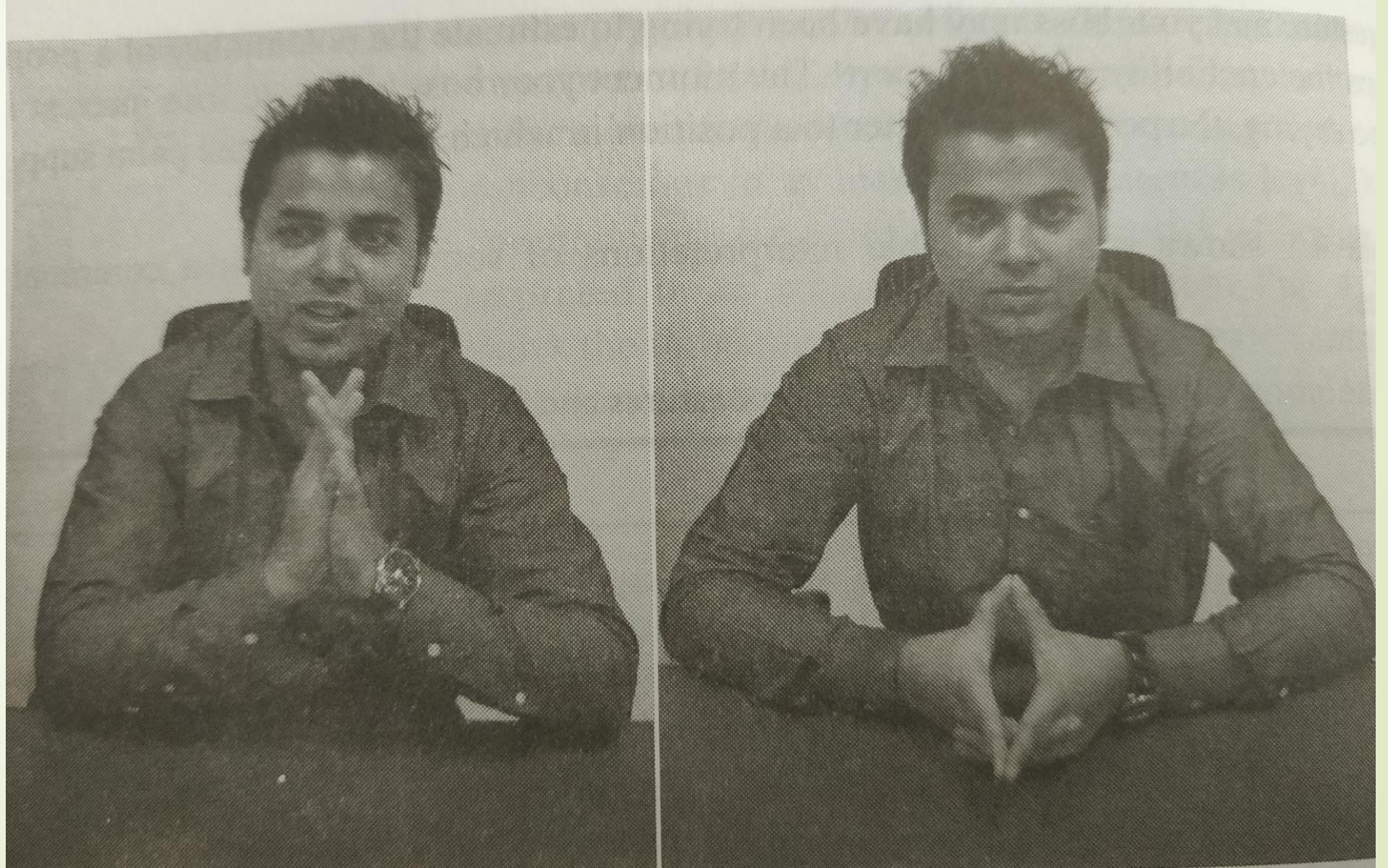
- Hand to support head – boredom,
- Head fully supported – extreme boredom and lack of interest
- Head on desk – ultimate boredom
- Drumming the fingers on the table – impatience
- Tapping feet on the floor – impatience
- Boss - fingers closed in fist, resting on cheek, finger pointing upwards - ?
- If position changes to heel of palm resting - ?



Gestures	Interpretations
Brisk, erect walk	Confidence, high status
Standing with hands on waist	Aggression
Sitting with legs crossed, foot kicking slightly	Boredom
Sitting with legs apart	Open, relaxed, unbothered
Arms crossed on chest	Defensiveness, cold attitude
Walking with hands in pockets, shoulders hunched	Dejection
Hand (two or three fingers) on cheek	Evaluating, thinking
Touching or slightly rubbing the nose	Rejection, doubt, lying
Rubbing the eye	Doubt, disbelief
Hands clasped behind back	Authoritativeness
Locked ankles	Apprehension
Head resting in hand, eyes downcast	Boredom, somber mood
Rubbing hands	Anticipation
Open palm	Sincerity, integrity
Tapping or drumming fingers	Impatience
Steepling fingers	Interest, determination
Tilted head	Interest
Stroking chin	Trying to make a decision
Looking down, face turned away	Disbelief, ignoring
Biting nails	Insecurity, anxiety, nervousness

Symbolic gestures: Specific to a society – V – victory, thumbs up (rude in some societies)

➤ **Steepling:**


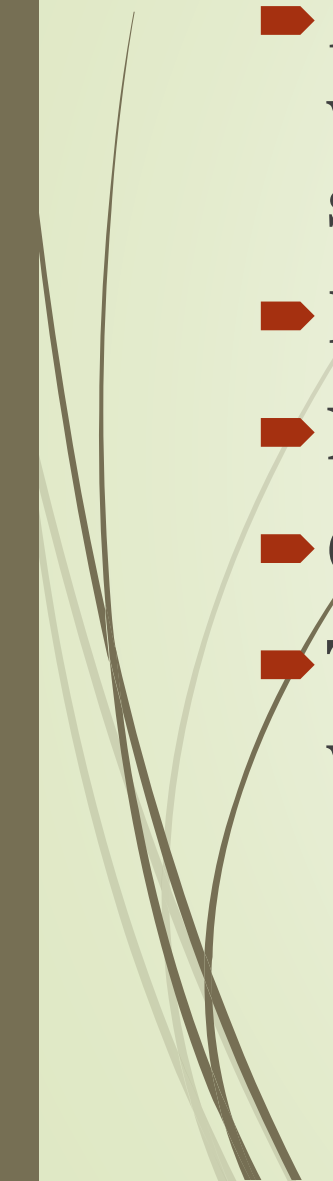


Leg positions



Body movement

- Shoulder shrug – I don't know, I don't care, I am doubtful, what can you do? – one shoulder – take your hand off, leave me alone
- Palm rub – pleasurable outcome, devious, or just cold
- Thumb display – 'cool manager' – thumb protruding from pocket (domination) – arms folded with thumb upward – *defensive or superior attitude*
- The mouth guard – *lying, discomfort* – While speaking – *uncomfortable for public speaker* - childish
- Nose touch

- 
- 
- Eye rub – block out deceit, doubt, lie – avoid seeing the person whom they are lying to, women rub below their eyes to avoid smudging of make-up
 - Ear rub – may have heard enough and wants to speak
 - Neck scratch – doubt or uncertainty, disagreement
 - Chin stroking – making a decision
 - Tongue thrust – childish when made a mistake or lip licking when nervous.

Body Posture and Gait

- Body posture – social gatherings, workplace – information about personality
- Two types – open, closed – lean forward – backward
- Slouching – submissiveness, fatigue
- Erect – energetic, dominant
- Firm handshake – assertive, honest
- Too firm – arrogant
- Folded arms across chest, legs closed, bodies turned away – guarded, rejecting messages
- Open hands, feet planted on ground – accepting messages



Proxemic communication

What?

- “It is the study of the ways in which individuals use physical space in their interaction to influence the outcome of the communication and the behavior of others”
- Word coined in 1963 by Prof. Edward. T. Hall
- It contains:
 - Space language
 - Personal, social and public territories
 - Seating arrangement and furniture placement



Space Language

- Immovable boundaries – divisions within an office building
- Semi fixed – movable boundaries like furniture, office interiors
- Informal space – space with self and friends
- All these spatial relations will create or impede communication
- Most important and most protected space – informal space – protected from intrusion of outsiders

Personal, social, public territories

- Hall divided space into four zones:
- Intimate space – 0-1.5 feet around us – touching, embracing, whispering – close friends, family
- Personal zone – radius -1.5 to 4 feet – shake hands, arms length – interaction with friends
- Social Zone – 4 – 10 feet, social and business people – acquaintances
- Public zone – 10 feet and beyond, zone for public speaking

Seating arrangement and furniture placement

- Ambience, layout, space, lighting, seating arrangement - speaks about work culture
- Asians – sit within hearing distance from each other – open work spaces
- Western/American - each one with private space – space gets larger with hierarchy
- French – position of manager in middle of subordinates
- **Where to sit** – head of the table (leader), closer to leader in seating – closer to power
- **Who you sit and don't sit with** - person with whom you disagree or massive arguments – don't sit in confrontational position
- **How you sit** - determines what your thought would be – so sit upright (not military alert), stay forward
- **What do you wear and what to do with your hands** – dress conservatively, arms on table, open body position, don't play with pen/paper, don't move hands too much (open hands)



Haptic Communication

What?

- Behaviour associated with touching – communication through touch
- Touching behavior – creates bond – handshake, pat, hug
- Work place – common haptic communication - Handshake and pat – varies from culture to culture
- Americans – firm hand shake – 3 – 5 pumps, French – light and quick
- **Under which circumstances this communication is likely to happen:**
- Giving information than receive
- Give order than receive
- Ask favour than grant
- Try persuading rather than getting persuaded
- Expressing excitement than listening to someone
- Listening to someone else's worry than expressing own

Types of handshakes

- Dominant – palm facing downwards
- Submissive - palm facing upwards – other assumes control
- Equal - vertical
- Aggressive – forcing other with palm upwards
- Dead Fish – sweaty, cold
- Stiff arm – keep at a distance
- Fingertip grab
- Double-handed



Chromatics

Colours and communication

- **Colour of clothes –**
- **Black** – authority, power – commonly used at workplace
- **White** – innocence and purity, good to wear
- **Red** – love, energy, makes one look heavier, not good for workplace
- **Pink** – good for informal gatherings, parties
- **Blue** – sky, ocean – helps body produce calming chemicals – used at workplace – wear for interviews – sincerity, loyalty
- **Green** – colour of nature, soothing on eyes, calming, Green rooms to relax, hospitals have green curtains.
- **Yellow** - Cheerfull, attention-getter, most difficult for eye to take in – thus cannot overdo, workplace – lighter shades can do
- **Purple** – connotes luxury, wealth and sophistication – feminine
- **Brown** – solid, reliable, colour of earth, light brown – genuineness, sometimes sad and bad mood.

Chronomatic

- “Study of use of time”
- Workplace – schedules, deadlines, appointments
- Vary from culture to culture – Brazil, USA, UK – punctuality is must, Middle east – time is controlled by will of God
- Germany, USA – view time as limited and plan few activities – time is valuable resource – not on time, meeting going off track –not acceptable to them
- Latin America, Asian – lots of flexibility in time – meeting deadline less important than building relations
- That’s why Americans find it difficult to do business with Indians



Paralinguistic features – self study

- Pace, pronunciation, voice intonation, voice modulation
 - Silences and pauses
- 



Dress Sense

- Dressing is an extension of your personality
- If someone shabbily dressed – “Cant take care of himself, will he take of the company” – if you dress well – impression is you care
- Kind of outfits – formal and informal – formal gives major boost to personality
- Formal – clothes should not attract more attention than work – revealing the least – modesty is the key – both men and women

Things to keep in mind

➤ Men

- Well tailored suits (if you have to) – dark colours , dark blue, brown, grey – double or single breasted (as per current style) – not just waist coat – button or unbutton during meetings or presentations as per need - well ironed
- trousers, shirt (mostly full sleeves – plain, striped or checked), tie, suspenders,
- black or brown shoes - clean, practical, smart shoes, socks match trousers - Oxfords pattern

Men...

- Belt and shoe colour should match
- no flamboyant/flashy tie– compliment the suit or shirt – light shirt and bright tie – tie change makes same suit look different – red tie – power – printed ties to being a change – never use patterns in shirt and tie together.
- Ties can be replaced by cravat. Or no tie but using cufflinks
- White shirt, good fit
- Tidy hair, well groomed - beard, moustaches trimmed
- pleasant perfume

Things to keep in mind

- **Women**
- In India - more choice of formal clothes – trousers/shirts, skirt and shirt, salwar suit, saree, business suits (with skirts or trousers)
- Clothes – not too tight or too loose – if skirt – not tight or short – should not be uncomfortable while sitting – trousers with collared shirts, turtleneck (can be worn with business suits or blazers,
- Skirts can be pencil-cut, A-line or flared – different patterns – tweed/checks, stripes, colours.
- Chose formal clothes as per your body type, comfort, company work culture – fashion should be last choice
- Wear colours that go well with complexion colour, built, age – good fibre (less noisy)
- Avoid – bright colours like orange, pink, red – business meetings interviews etc.



Women...

- no heavy jewellery – should not be noisy, danglers, bangles, heavy neckpieces distracting for collar mikes
- Women have lots of options of accessories – scarfs, belts,
- no loud make-up
- Hair – tied well or even if let lose should not be distracting
- Footwear – Kitten heels, slingbacks, court shoes/pumps, Stilettos, clogs (only if allowed), Wedges, sandals, flats