



WORKPLACE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

MPU3272-WPCS

Group 6

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Abstract

Workplace relationships offer greater benefits than we may expect it to be. With peer interaction, we are able to achieve higher productivity among employees. Understanding colleagues' cultures results in better communication. Furthermore, together with body language, it can be used to encourage collaboration between employees. Lastly, social awareness allows us to think from other perspectives which leads to better work environment, boost professionalism, and live happier life.

Introduction

According to International Labour Organization (ILO) (n.d.), workplaces include shared building, industrial estates, and even private roads under the condition that they are made appropriate to any person as a place of work. However, workplaces differ between perspectives. For instance, we may consider restaurant as a place where people would dine in, but for chefs and waiters, it is perceived as a workplace. Together, the word workplace relationships can be interpreted as the connections between people in the workplace.

According to (P. M. Sias, 2005), workplace relationships are unique interpersonal relationships that possess significant result for those involved in the relationships as well as the organization in which the relationships are nurtured (p. 377). Furthermore, if the interactions do not occur frequently, it said that the employees are engaging in co-worker communication rather than co-worker relationship (Sias, 2012, p. 106).

As we know, workplace relationships may encourage employees to be more open and feel encouraged to collaborate. This can be seen from a survey conducted by Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) in 2016. Among 600 respondents for a survey of job satisfaction and engagement, approximately 77% of them suggest that relationship with co-workers and 74% for relationship with immediate supervisor are the one of the main drivers of employee engagement (SHRM, 2016) (see Figure 1). Additionally, a 2018 study conducted by *Future Workplace* and *Virgin Pulse* found that among the surveyed 2000 managers and employees in 100 countries, almost 40% of them felt lonely and desperate for social connection due to most communication is done through email (Mannarino, 2016).

The founder of *Goodthink* and Harvard Researcher, Shawn Achor, found that during his research on Harvard students, social connection is the greatest predictor for happiness in a hypercompetitive environment. The same applies to Google where they found the success rates of team were highly linked to the social cohesion on the team, said Shawn (Mannarino, 2016). Lastly, Richard Branson, founder of *Virgin Group*, once said, “Clients do not come first. Employees come first. If you take care of your employees, they will take care of the clients.” (Miller, 2020)

All these workplace relationships can be managed eventually by looking at some aspects, e.g., peer interaction, cultural awareness, body language, social awareness, etc. According to CASEL (2013), social awareness is the capability to see from different perspectives, to

understand social and ethical norm behaviour. Therefore, it has a wider scope compared to cultural awareness.

Peer interaction

We all know that the idea of working alone can be tempting at times because we wouldn't be forced to attend meetings, this allows us to concentrate on our own things without getting distracted by messages and emails, basically we would have complete control over getting what you need to do when you need it. While teamwork and collaboration have their disadvantages, it is something that we cannot just ignore.

That is why we should interact with our peers. Peer interactions are relationships between employees who work at the same level in the company but have no authority over each other (Vantage Circle, 2021). People who join companies nowadays are looking for elements that would make their workplace a more friendly environment. Nowadays, employees are looking for a more satisfying working environment that delivers a sense of accomplishment, rather than good pay. A sense of purpose is the most powerful workplace motivator, especially for younger generations. That does not mean that financial benefits are not important.

Importance of peer interaction

In today's working world, a great leader must recognise that employees must be supported in their desire to accomplish meaningful work (Mery, 2020).

Most employees believe having friends at their workplace is the most crucial element to a happy working life. Employees obviously do not want to feel alone and ignored. So why should we pay close attention to peer interaction at work? It turns out that it has a few benefits, not just for employees, but for the entire company. When employees have a best friend at work, they are more productive and could perform better. They are more likely to be enthusiastic about their job and produce higher-quality work. Peer interaction at work can also increase employee happiness, which motivates them to finish their work. Not only that, peer interaction boosts team morale and relationships at work hence it keeps everyone in a good mood. Lastly, quality workplace friendships will boost job satisfaction and happiness. In general, people are more likely to collaborate when they get along, know they're supported, and when they feel connected from one to another (Boogaard, 2020).

How to improve peer interaction

- **Always keep promises.** If you don't start with the basics of maintaining relationship, all the people in the world won't be able to build a strong relationship with you. Always following through on what you stated you would do. Trust is the foundation of any relationship whether if it is personal or professional, you should begin by keeping your word and always keep track of your deadlines. People are hesitant to build close relationships with people they don't trust.
- **Connect with employees personally.** There's no shortage of work-related topics to discuss, whether you're inquiring about the status of a project or looking at your schedules for upcoming meeting. If we want to connect deeper, we could ask about our peer's personal lives, even if it's something as simple as what they did over the weekend. It's up to us to figure out what we are comfortable talking about with our peers.
- **Cheer them up.** Compliments are very powerful. Furthermore, we are drawn to people who compliment us. Cheer up your colleague after a job well done. Alternatively, express gratitude for their support to your project. It's a seemingly small gesture that can have a significant impact on your relationship in the workplace.
- **Listen.** There's nothing more frustrating than not being heard. If you don't truly listen to your peers, your efforts to build a relationship with them will slowly be wasted. Make every effort to try to listen to what your peers share with you. If you don't go that extra mile, your efforts to build a relationship with them will be in vain.

Study at a Lujeri Tea Estate in Malawi

Now I will present a case study that relates to peer interaction. This study was conducted by three people, L. Brune, E. Chyn, and J. Kerwin on May 7, 2020, to find the workplace peer effects at a tea estate in Malawi. The sample is a group of approximately 1000 employees who pluck leaves from tea bushes. These workers are paid based on the amount of plucked tea. The observation was done by assigning the workers where in some cycle they have neighbouring peers while no peer in some cycle (see Figure 7). They found that the worker's output is affected by the average co-workers' ability. With an increase by 10% of co-workers' ability, the worker's output is increased by 0.3 percent as well. Furthermore, the worker's traits contribute to the peer effects in which women workers' output are more likely to increase due to the mean peer ability. On the next harvesting season, they did survey on the workers on choosing new co-workers (see Figure 8). The results were surprising:

- 72% of the workers wished to work with peers who has high-productivity level.
- 46% of them were willing to sacrifice the gift from survey participation (worth 18% of daily wages) to work with faster co-workers.
- Three-quarter of the respondent mention that working near faster peers motivate them.

(Brune et al., 2020)

Study at a Retail Firm

Another study conducted by Mas and Moretti (2009), was to find out the impact of peer effects in a retail firm. It is believed that most white-collar jobs, construction, some manufacturing and retail firm suffer from a free-rider problem. This is a problem in which a work is perceived as a whole group work rather than individual units, which results in some employees may slack off but still gain output. However, a theory by E. Kandel and E. Lazear (1992, as cited in Mas & Moretti, 2009), states that peer effects can countervail free riding in partnership. The finding from Mas and Moretti is due to knowledge spillovers, the existence of fast workers leads to more productive slow workers, but the presence of slow workers does not affect the speed of the faster workers (p. 135). The conclusion of this study is strong peer effects are associated with high-productivity workers.

Peer Effects on Productivity

According to Cornelissen et al. (2017), a productivity of a worker can be affected by two factors, namely, peer pressure and knowledge spillover. Peer pressure happens when a worker experience guilt or shame due to his/her ability is lower compared to co-workers. Thus, they often try to increase their own effort to defeat these feelings. On the other hand, knowledge spillover happens in which co-workers gain knowledge from each other which eventually results in acquiring new skills.

Cultural Awareness in Work Environment

A work environment where employees do their own work and do not communicate with each other is a terrible kind of work environment. Some places have a diverse work environment which some people do not feel comfortable working in because they are sometimes not

treated fairly. This has been one of the most common problem that are happening everywhere around the world. The best work environment is where employees can express their opinion and communicate with each other without any discrimination. The relationship between workers is important to keep the flow of the work.

Being aware of colleagues' culture is not enough to make a good work environment. Understanding clients' culture is also one of the most important part of working since it would affect the company from many ways. By understanding their culture, it would deepen the relationship between client and the workers.

Importance of Cultural Awareness

Employees may differ in a variety of ways in the workplace, including age, gender, nationality, race, gender identity, religion, and physical and mental abilities. Work may flow more easily and without employee complaints when companies recognize these diversities (Maness & Conway-Klaassen, 2017). Understanding people's cultures allows employees to communicate with each other more successfully, going beyond words and language. Cultural awareness also improves our cultural competency in relation to the people around us and throughout the world, allowing us to get a better knowledge of other people's cultures as well as our own, while also enhancing our tolerance and expanding our perspectives.

When coming across a new language or culture, people would immediately make a comparison with their own culture and realize that their culture is also not normal for other people. Understanding and appreciate other employees' culture and differences would make a work atmosphere that is both homogeneous and inclusive.

Relations Between Culture and Behaviour

Someone's cultural background reflects everything about them. It influences our behaviour, how they communicate, also their values and believes. While most of the employees in the workplace are more familiar with the more visible aspects of other cultures such as food, dress, or music. They are often less aware of the things that are not so obvious such as social values or non-verbal behaviour and these maybe different than our own, for example:

- Direct eye contact means different things to different cultures. For some it seems as aggressive and intimidating, whereas for other culture, it is a way to establish trust between each other.
- Physical contact is frowned upon in some cultures, whereas in others it is an important way of bonding and showing empathy.
- Nodding your head in agreement, for example, can lead to misunderstandings in Greece and Albania. But for some other culture, it is one way of saying that you agreed.

Failure of Cultural Awareness in a Company Case Study

McDonalds is one of the fast-food giants in the world. McDonald's spent thousands of dollars on a new television commercial aimed at the Chinese market. The commercial featured a Chinese guy kneeling in front of a McDonald's employee, pleading with him to accept his expired discount voucher. McDonald's dropped the commercial due to a lack of cultural awareness on their part. The commercial sparked outrage since begging is seen as a humiliating act in Chinese culture (Commisceo Global, n.d.). This is a fatal decision that cost the company a lot of money. This issue may be avoided by doing some preliminary study on the target culture. Cultural awareness must be at the centre of everything a company does if it wants to thrive globally, from its personal interactions and connections with clients to the products and services it develops.

Many people think that 'if it is OK for us, it is OK for them,' and this mindset is to be avoided in every company since it would affect the company's income but mainly their reputation as a good company.

How to Implement Cultural Awareness in Workplace

There are many problems that can happen in a workplace when people ignore cultural awareness in workplace. These are some of the ways to prevent ignorance of cultural awareness:

- Create policies and guidelines for cultural awareness. Developing and implementing diversity guidelines and policies is a crucial step in ensuring cultural awareness among the personnel. it may offer clarity on how employees of various backgrounds

should interact with one another by establishing standards about what is appropriate and ethical behaviour in the workplace (Ahmed, 2020).

- Try to learn different cultures as much as possible. There are some people that shows insensitivity and a risk of accidental blindness to the values that are essential to people from different cultures. This is why we must expose ourselves to the cultures around us, watch them, and interact with them. Attending cultural festivals and events is one of the easiest methods of learning about other cultures. You can witness how various individuals express themselves via music, food, and art in the area (Maina, 2021).
- Avoid misunderstandings by communicating clearly. Miscommunication and misunderstanding can lead employees to have a conflict because people from different culture have their own way to show and express their feeling from verbal or physical communication. Spend some time researching the communication conventions of various cultures while dealing with international colleagues, partners, and clients.

Body Language in Work Environment

Effective workplace communication skills need more than just being able to talk and write well. It's equally as essential to understand the nonverbal cues that individuals employ to communicate their feelings and ideas. Being attentive, sympathetic, and self-aware is required for good body language interpretation.

What is Body Language

In the dictionary it means conscious and unconscious movements and postures by which attitudes, and feelings are communicated. All nonverbal communication skills are referred to as "body language." Any communication transmitted without the use of words is referred to as a non-verbal message. Body language includes facial expressions, gestures, postures, and other movement-based clues. Body language is commonly used in conjunction with verbal information to communicate clearly and effectively. In many situations, body language is one of the most essential components of communication (Indeed, 2021). There are some instances of different types of body language:

- **Expressions on the face.** The external body part is extremely expressive, and it's effective in communicating feelings without saying anything. Facial expressions, unlike certain other forms of nonverbal communication, are universal. Across civilizations, facial expressions expressing happiness, anger, sadness, fear, surprise, and contempt are the identical (Segal et al., 2020).
- **Gestures.** When arguing or talking excitedly, you may wave, point, call, or use your hand, often expressing yourself without thinking using gestures. However, some gestures can have different meanings in a country. While a hand-held "OK" sign, for example, typically conveys a positive message in English-speaking countries, it is considered insulting in Germany, Russia, and Brazil. As a result, it is very important to be careful about how you use gestures to avoid misunderstandings (Segal et al., 2020).
- **Eye contact.** Because most people's visual senses are dominant, eye contact is a particularly significant kind of nonverbal communication. The way you stare at someone may convey a variety of emotions, such as desire, love, or anger.

Maintaining eye contact is also crucial for keeping a discussion going and evaluating the other person's attention and response (Segal et al., 2020).

- **Touch.** Touch is a powerful tool for communication. Consider how a poor handshake, a loving bear hug, a condescending pat on the head, or a dominating grasp on the arm send completely different meanings (Segal et al., 2020).

In the workplace, body language may convey a number of meanings. Both in private and in public, you communicate through your body language. You almost probably use body language every time you have a chat with a co-worker, attend a meeting, or introduce yourself to a customer (Indeed, 2021).

During the course of a workday, body language may convey a variety of signals. Importantly, body language communicates a person's level of interest or concentration. We have someone's complete attention if they make eye contact with us, nod as we speak, or lean toward us while you're talking. Someone may be bored or preoccupied if they are leaning back in their chair, gazing away from us, or fiddling their fingers. If we need to evaluate how a person or a team responds to our ideas or proposals, seeing and understanding these messages might help (Indeed, 2021).

It also has an impact on the productivity and relationships of the entire team. We improve our skills as a professional communicator if we can properly understand body language. It's crucial to remember certain basic truths about body language as we try to enhance our knowledge of it in the workplace (Indeed, 2021).

First and foremost, deciphering body language requires an understanding of context. Depending on the person and the context, certain behaviours might signify quite different things.

- Crossed arms might indicate dissatisfaction or discomfort. They can, however, convey confidence or a laid-back attitude in some people.
- Westerners may put their hands on their hips while thinking unconsciously whereas Indonesians interpreted it as sign of aggression and anger (Keatley, 2013).
- Scratching nose may be caused by an itch rather than hiding a lie (trainday, n.d.).

Secondly, we would need to take age and gender into account. Compared to young men who are more energetic and have good posture, older women are often less energetic and have modest posture (trainday, n.d.).

The more we know about our boss, co-workers, or clientele, the easier it will be to understand their body language (Indeed, 2021).

There are numerous methods to utilise body language in the workplace to our advantage. Others' reactions to us might be influenced by our body language. It may also influence how others view us and our motives. Being mindful of our own body language may have an impact on our productivity and reputation at work. Body language has the ability to increase an individual's honesty, conflict resolution, and teamwork. We may increase our value to our company and co-workers by improving your ability to read and understand body language.

How to improve our body language or non-verbal communication

Nonverbal communication needs our full attention from time to time. You will almost likely miss nonverbal clues and not fully understand the person you are speaking with if you are not attentive or thinking about anything else. Learning to handle stress and increasing emotional awareness can help you enhance your nonverbal communication. (Segal et al., 2020)

Learning to handle stress

Your ability to communicate is affected by stress. When we are anxious, we are more likely to misinterpret people, convey incorrect nonverbal messages, and fall into undesirable spontaneous behaviour patterns. Keep in mind that emotions are contagious. If you're unhappy, you're more likely to irritate the other person, exacerbating the problem (Segal et al., 2020).

Take a time to relax if you're stressed before returning to the conversation. You'll feel more able to cope with events in a good way once you've restored your emotional equilibrium.

Developing/Increasing emotional awareness

You must be aware of your emotions and how they influence you in order to give correct nonverbal messages. You must also be able to detect other people's emotions and the actual

feelings hidden beneath their signals. This is when emotional intelligence comes into play (Segal et al., 2020).

Body languages is more than body movement and positions.

Oftentimes, body language is closely correlates to body motion and posture. However, these are not always the case as body language is often discuss hand-to-hand with other non-verbal communication and may be considered under the same category. Thus, almost everything that we do can be considered as body language unless it is a mainstream language. The examples for body language are as follows.

1. Distant (proximity) between us and the interlocutor
2. Body postures
3. Our facial expressions
4. How our eyes move
5. How we touch ourselves
6. The way we hold something
7. Our breathing pattern
8. The pace, pitch, volume, of our voice.

The point regarding audio signal is often perceived as a tricky point. Unlike other points, where the information can be extracted visually, hints coming from our words per minute, volume, etc. are easy to be overlooked because they share the same transmission medium as the main conversation.

Consequently, voice type is always important to consider alongside the usual body language factors. Similarly breathing and heartbeat are typically excluded from many general descriptions of body language but are certainly part of the rang of non-verbal bodily actions and signals which contribute to body language in its fullest sense.

Beside audio signal, it is also easy to miss some of body movements as well. These are mostly the minor adjustment rather than a big one, i.e., our eye movement. The following are the most common thing to look for concerning eye motion.

- Our responses to other people's eyes, namely movement, focus, expressions, etc.
- The size of our pupil.
- A single look may convey tons of emotion.

Almost everything that has been mentioned earlier are being carried out by us subconsciously and most of us do not even bother to think about it. Simultaneously, how we react upon others action is often done intuitively. Consequently, we have loss quite a bit of value as putting some effort to learn these small but critical hints can increase our awareness to our surroundings sharply and capability to deal with others.

Implications of Body Language in Workplace

As we all know, body language can convey meaningful information to others. When someone captured that information, they may react accordingly to what they perceive. Take a leader as example, they can use body language to encourage and support those under them indirectly. This indicates that leaders who tend to smile, have open posture are more inviting to work with. Thus, increasing works productivity. Compare this with leaders with close posture and straight face, employees may suggest that these leaders are hard to approach and therefore decreasing work engagement (Keatley, 2013).

Association Between Hand Gestures and Job Satisfaction

This is a study conducted by Ciuffani (2017) from University of Twente on various hand gestures used by leaders in meetings and the impact on job satisfaction. She observed 20 recordings of a meetings to learn the gestures and then surveyed 113 the attendees of the meetings to rate their thoughts on the meetings. To ease out the study, she listed various type of gestures:

- No gestures
- Upward facing palm gestures
- Downward facing palm gestures
- Mixed palm gestures
- Clasped hands
- Object touch
- Self-touch head
- Self-touch body

Next, she came up with a hypothesis on each gesture (see Figure 3). After analysing how many times each gesture was performed and its duration, she constructed tables to deduce the

link between job satisfaction from the survey and hand gestures. Based on Figure 4 to Figure 6, she concluded that mixed palms and self-touch head have a positive impact on job satisfaction and none of the hand gestures have significant negative impact on job satisfaction. Hence, it can be summarized that body language has quite an impact on workplace relationship which affects one's job satisfaction.

Body Language in Construction Project

According to Gunhan and Senol (2012), problems often occur even in a simple construction project, namely building a single-family house. This can be seen from how wide the network of communication in a project, starting from the client, architect, workforce, material suppliers, and control officers. This is why communication issues are prevalent in this industry. In the summary of the Report of the Australian Federation of Construction Contractors (AFCC, 2002, as cited in Gunhan & Senol, 2012) stated that claims and disputes have been an endemic part of the construction industry worldwide. Following that, a professor emeritus of psychology named Albert Mehrabian discover 7%-38%-55% rule during his study in 1971 regarding face-to-face communication. These percentages are:

- 7% words
- 38% vocal
- 55% body language

Surprisingly, almost half of face-to-face communication is carried out by body language (Kurien, 2010, as cited in Gunhan & Senol, 2012).

The root of ineffective communication in a construction project can be identified from a finding where the nature of a construction project is temporal (Wikforss & Alexander, 2007, as cited in Gunhan & Senol, 2012). This means that it is highly probable that a leader of a project may work with different partners, i.e., workforce and supplier, on different projects. The same applies for the relationship between the contractors as well where some of them are migrants which introduce a language barrier. This is identified as the fifth priority to be resolved in Singapore's construction industry productivity (Loosemore, 2002, as cited in Gunhan & Senol, 2012).

It can be concluded that although one project is heavily technical oriented, we should not treat body language lightly as it can bring significant impact on the work progress.

Social awareness

The social awareness concept is quite straightforward. It can be defined as an individual's ability to think about the viewpoints of other teams, people and communities and implement what they have understood to interact with them (SEL Articles, 2020). This skill is developed since childhood. In reality, most individuals agree that being "socially aware" is a skill that can be developed throughout adulthood. When people are confronted with new knowledge and situation this encourages them to consider other people's perspectives. In other words, it can also be said that social awareness is the ability to detect and respond effectively towards both social and interpersonal issues of society, which means that being socially aware is to take concern about the environment as well as understanding the peoples' emotions (Chapel, 2020).

Importance of Social awareness

Social awareness skills help individuals to comprehend the way they are adapting into and responding to the organisations and the universe as they grow up and also, they learned about their need that they can receive from the earth. Besides, these skills help the people to grasp professionalism in the job sectors for long-term, as well as facilitate sharing interacting, knowledge, and cooperating with people easier. Social awareness is an essential aspect of developing relationships and friendships, which can help us live happier and more satisfying life (SEL Articles, 2020).

Empathy is one of the important components of social awareness. It is important to grasp own emotions, abilities, and values so that they may manage their emotions and concentrate on what they want to accomplish (Davis, 2021). However social awareness is indeed evolving during teenage times, it is an essential ability to inculcate in them. This is not just for the long-term consequences also it will assist them to use all their education in future with other people. Socially aware students can more quickly adapt to the new surroundings, considering how others may feel, and will indulge in few behavioural issues (SEL Articles, 2020).

Example of social awareness

In both personal and professional life, having effective social awareness abilities is crucial. There are a few examples of persons who are really good at social awareness.

One CEO of a company name Eugenia has a staff meeting. She was all set to begin her presentation, which she had meticulously prepared. Right away she noticed that there was an issue. By observing the staff's body language and behaviour, she deduced that they were having some issues. Rather of moving on with her objective, Eugenia took a break to seek advice from the others. From their feedback she found some problems in company, and she immediately made some changes in the managements and then she continued the meeting and that seems all staff were concentrated in the meeting and was supportive. Eugenia's behaviours have demonstrated a high level of social awareness (Chapel, 2020).

To observe the growth of social awareness, school is the best area to look examples in every minute of how children is developing their social awareness. There is an example of some children regarding their social awareness. In a class two children sat quietly and participated in peer tutoring. One more child wanted to join them, so he jumped into the conversation and drew everyone's attention to him. The other two kids had no choice but to cooperate (SEL Articles, 2020). This behaviour of third children shows the social decision and how he socially engaged the other.

Types of social awareness

Daniel Goleman's have given some theory on social-emotional learning and build the concept of social and emotional intelligence on a number of fundamental social awareness elements (SEL Articles, 2020), that includes:

- **Emotional self-awareness** – this is acknowledging what someone is experiencing and comprehending and how different emotions might affect people around us.
- **Motivation** - Understanding how to harness emotional aspects to study and achieve personal goals is part of motivation.
- **Respect** - Respect is described as concerning the emotions, opinions, desires, or interests of another individual or group.
- **Kindness** - Kindness refers to the act of being friendly and sympathetic to everyone else, and it is particularly vital even if you disagree with their perspective.
- **Cooperation** - Cooperation is a vital component of coming up with a solution or a way to collaborate with other people or groups. It frequently implies compromising, yet it aids in the achievement of common objectives.

- **Empathy** - Empathy is the ability to think about other people's feelings and situations (SEL Articles, 2020).

Lack of social Awareness

Inconvenient silences might emerge from a lack of social awareness. This occurs when there is a lack of communication and information is inaccurate or inaccessible; it develops as a result of cultural issues, prejudices, and anxieties that prevent individuals from interacting with each other (Davis, 2021).

Online activities impact in social awareness

Video conferencing, digital communication, social networking, and other new technologies lead to social isolation and are frequently blamed for a loss of empathy. People may easily comment negatively about others without facing them, and if they don't want to indulge in other's issues, they can simply unfriend them, which is a quick solution. This essentially poses a problem since there is no empathy, and when one does not understand each other, trust issues arise. In the case of businesses, this might become a serious concern (Connelly, 2020).

Skills that developed social awareness

There are numerous skills/tactics that can be used to improve social awareness. A few of these abilities are listed below:

Watch facial expressions and body language – Keep an eye out for nonverbal cues. To detect things like facial expressions and body language, individual need to pay full attention. While this will necessitate additional effort, it will pay off eventually (Sprimont, n.d.).

Notice the details – if individuals want to connect to their staffs, they need to look at surroundings and see the things in front of them. Keep an eye on what is happening in the company without interrupting staff's mood (Sprimont, n.d.).

Stop taking notes – It can have negative consequences in the workplace. While taking notes, an individual may overlook important information, thus it is vital to interact with others in the meeting.

Conclusion

Workplace relationship is very important and highly desired as shown in SHRM survey. It is also one of the best happiness predictors for those who work in a strict environment. The first aspect talks about how we are connected to our peers and impact our work quality. It has been shown by both studies that people who are surrounded by better peers are more likely to put more effort and increase their work productivity. The next aspect concerns about culture awareness in which McDonalds suffered from thousands of dollars due to the advertisement that was valued as humiliating to Chinese culture. Therefore, it is important to understand others' cultures to introduce a more conducive work environment.

Thirdly, we have 7%-38%-55% rule which describe body language as the major source of information in a face-to-face conversation. The impact of body language is discussed on the two case studies in which hand gesture can positively affect job satisfaction, and the importance of body language even in construction projects which are more technical-oriented. Lastly, social awareness allows us to be more professional and land long-term jobs. Besides, being socially aware make us more adaptive to new situation and able to react accordingly.

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Appendix



Key Findings

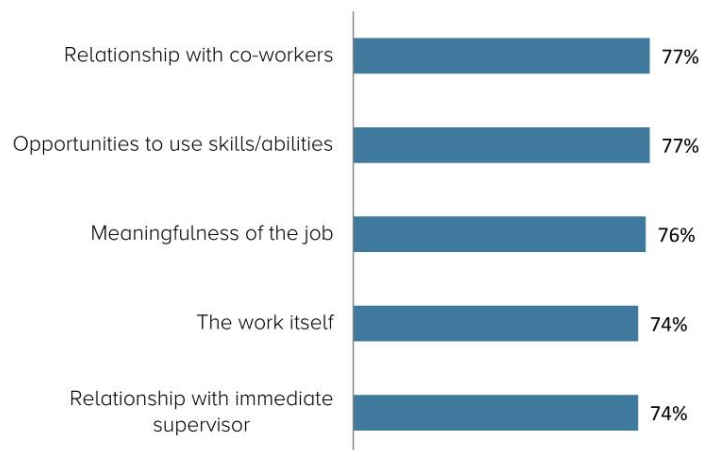
- **Employees are satisfied with their jobs.** Eighty-eight percent of employees reported overall satisfaction with their current job; 37% reported being very satisfied and 51% somewhat satisfied.
- **Employees are engaged at work.** Eighty-nine percent of employees indicated feeling confident they could meet their work goals, and 86% reported feeling determined to accomplish these goals.
- **There are several conditions under which engagement at work is more likely to occur.** Over three-fourths (77%) of employees were satisfied with their relationships with co-workers and opportunities to use skills/abilities. Employees also indicated being satisfied with the meaningfulness of the job (76%).
- **Overall compensation/pay demonstrated the largest gap between importance and satisfaction among employees.** While 63% of employees reported compensation/pay as a very important job satisfaction contributor, only 23% were very satisfied. Respectful treatment of all employees at all levels had the second largest gap, at 36 percentage points.

Top Engagement Opinions



Note: Figure represents those who answered "agree" and "strongly agree."

Top Engagement Conditions



Note: Figure represents those who answered "somewhat satisfied" and "very satisfied."

Figure 1 Job Engagement and Satisfaction Survey Statistic

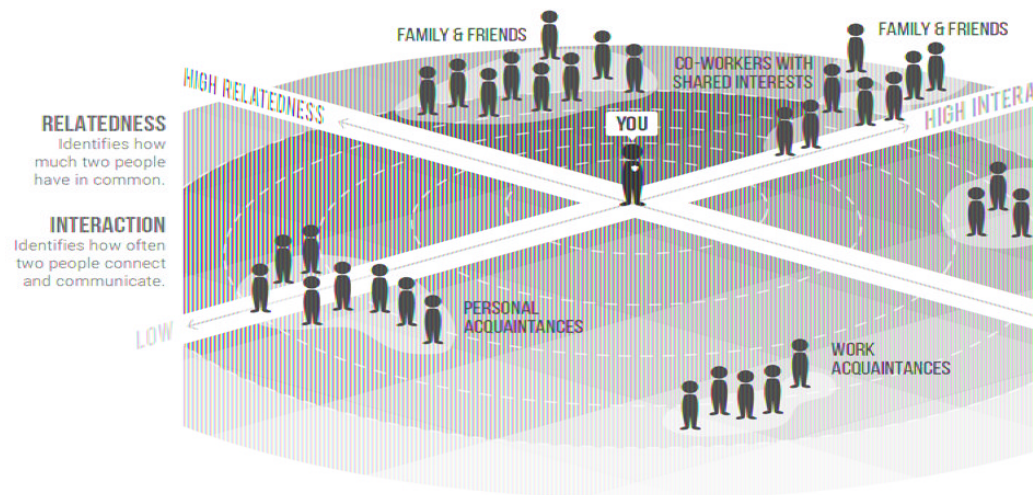


Figure 2 Relatedness Diagram (Dornfeld, n.d.)

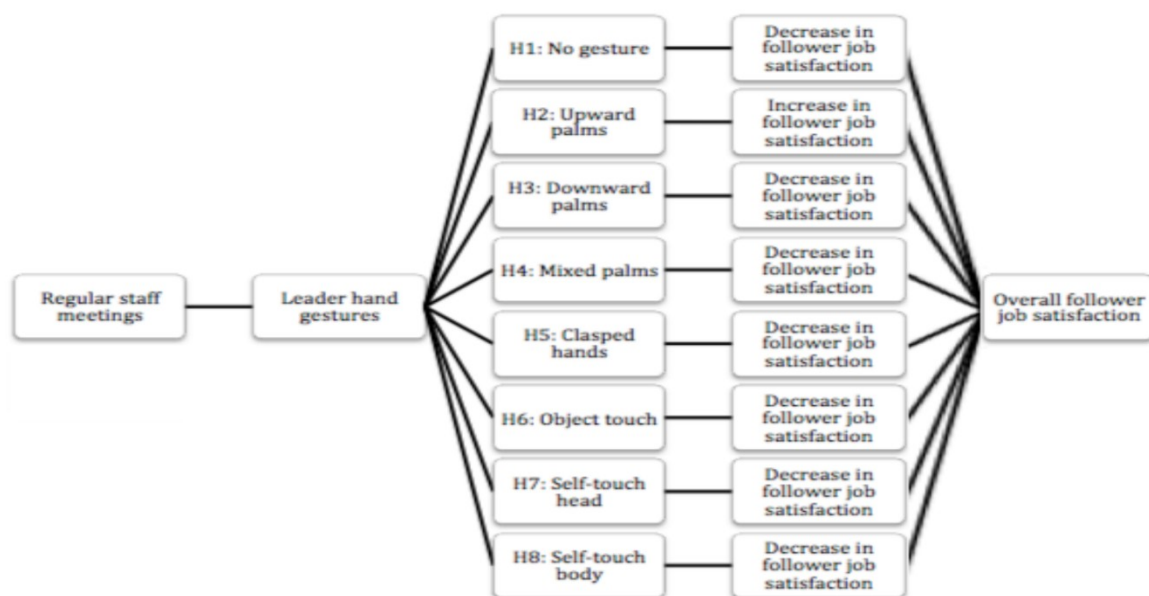


Figure 3 Hypothesis on Hand Gestures

Table 2*Follower Job Satisfaction and Gesture Duration Correlation and Descriptive Statistics*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Job Satisfaction	—								
2. No Gesture	.062	—							
3. Upward palms	-.043	-.066	—						
4. Downward inward palms	.276	-.632**	-.005	—					
5. Mixed palms	.437*	-.454*	.261	.665**	—				
6. Clasped hands	-.265	-.824**	-.305	.229	-.012	—			
7. Object touch	.232	.120	-.174	-.074	-.215	-.028	—		
8. Self-touch head	.415*	-.005	-.017	.207	.369	-.128	-.111	—	
9. Self-touch body	.194	-.128	-.308	.267	.096	.122	-.119	-.298	—

*p < .05 **p < .01. (one-tailed)

*Figure 4 Gesture Duration Correlation***Table 3***Follower Job Satisfaction and Gesture Frequency Correlation and Descriptive Statistics*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Job Satisfaction	—								
2. No Gesture	.093	—							
3. Upward palms	-.169	.718**	—						
4. Downward inward palms	.319	.479*	.236	—					
5. Mixed palms	.209	.670**	.459*	.515*	—				
6. Clasped hands	-.108	.014	.072	.348	.592**	—			
7. Object touch	.060	.324	-.041	.235	.100	.122	—		
8. Self-touch head	.368	.288	-.085	.418*	.188	.064	.337	—	
9. Self-touch body	-.066	-.153	-.310	-.072	-.187	-.221	-.055	-.120	—

*p < .05 **p < .01. (one-tailed)

Figure 5 Gesture Frequency Correlation

Table 4
Regression
Follower Job Satisfaction and Gesture Duration (N = 20)

Variable	No Gesture	Upward palms	Downward palms	Mixed palms	Clasped hands	Object touch	Self-touch head	Self-touch body
Job Satisfaction	.062	-.043	.276	.437	-.265	.232	.415	.194
R ²	.004	.002	.076	.191	.070	.054	.172	.038

Note: Coefficients are betas (standardized regression coefficients)

Table 5
Regression
Follower Job Satisfaction and Gesture Frequency (N = 20)

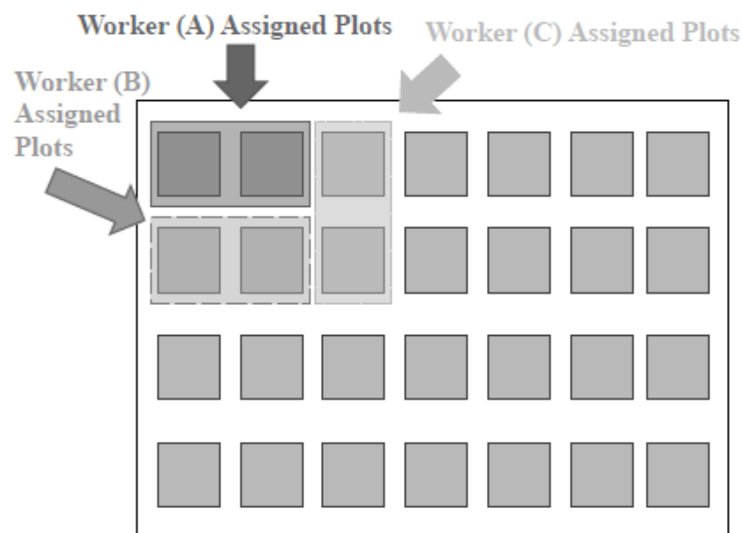
Variable	No Gesture	Upward palms	Downward palms	Mixed palms	Clasped hands	Object touch	Self-touch head	Self-touch body
Job Satisfaction	.093	-.169	.319	.209	-.108	.060	.368	-.066
R ²	.009	.029	.102	.044	.012	.004	.135	.004

Note: Coefficients are betas (standardized regression coefficients)

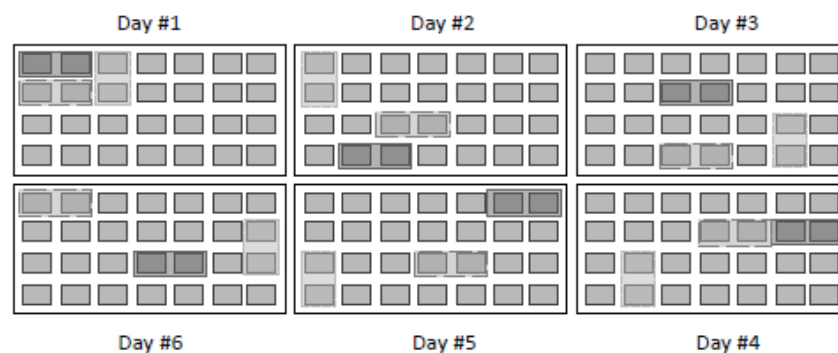
Figure 6 Gesture Duration and Frequency Regression

Figure 1: Tea Worker Field Assignment Illustrations

(a) Hypothetical Assignment for Three Tea Workers



(b) Plot Assignments Change Over Days in Harvesting Cycle



Notes: The two panels illustrate work assignments for tea workers at the Lujeri Tea Estates in Malawi. Panel A shows how three workers would be assigned two plots each. For our analysis, all workers A, B and C would be neighboring co-workers. Panel B shows how plot work assignments change over the course of a six-day harvest cycle during which the gang of workers visits six distinct fields. On some days and fields, workers A, B and C are neighbors. Yet there are also cases where they are not neighbors: for example, on days #3, #5 and #6, workers A, B and C are not assigned to work in neighboring plots.

Figure 7 Tea worker field assignment illustration (Brune et al., 2020)

Table 8: Preferences for Fast Peers

	(1) Pct.	(2) Obs.
Who do you want to be reassigned next to?		
A fast plucker in your gang	0.72	434
A slow plucker in your gang	0.05	434
Any person of your choosing	0.09	434
No reassignment	0.14	434
Wants to work near a fast plucker and...		
...is willing to give up 1 bar of soap	0.59	434
...is willing to give up 2 bars of soap	0.46	434

Notes: This table presents statistics from survey data that we collected for a subset of tea pluckers at the Lujeri Tea Estates. In the survey questions, faster and slow peers were described as co-workers who are in the top or bottom 10 percent of the gang in terms of kilograms of tea plucked per day, respectively. Appendix Section F provides details of the survey prompt and questions that we used to collect responses. For the choice experiment, respondents were given a gift of two bars of soap (worth 18 percent of average daily wages) and asked if they would be willing to give up soap in exchange for being reassigned.

Figure 8 Tea Estate Survey (Brune et al., 2020)