

Chapter 5

Verbal and Nonverbal Communication in Groups





A woman with glasses and a ponytail, wearing a white t-shirt and jeans, sits on a light-colored rock formation. She is looking down at a tablet device she is holding in her hands. The background shows a vast landscape with rolling hills and a clear sky. A large, thin blue circle surrounds the entire scene. Inside this circle, a smaller blue circle is centered on the woman's head. To the right of the woman, a blue rectangular box contains the text "Let's Start!" in white, sans-serif font.

Let's Start!

Two Essential Tools

to generate meaning

Verbal Communication

- How you use words and language

Nonverbal Communication

- Message components other than words that generate meaning

Verbal messages express the literal content of messages, while nonverbal messages express the emotional meaning.

Virginia P. Richmond, James C. McCroskey, and Mark L. Hickson, III,
Nonverbal Behavior in Interpersonal Relations, 7th ed. (Boston, MA:
Pearson/Allyn & Bacon, 2012), 5.



Levels of Meaning

Denotative Meaning

The objective, dictionary-based meaning of a word



TUESDAY: The day of the week after Monday and before Wednesday



Vocabulary

denotative

adjective • LANGUAGE • specialized

UK /dɪ'neʊ.tə.tɪv/ US /'di:.nou.tə.tɪv/

connotative

adjective • LANGUAGE • specialized

UK /'knɒ.kə.tɪv/ US /'ka:.nə.tɪv/

Connotative Meaning

The personal feelings and ideas connected to the meaning of a word

TUESDAY: a person, usually female, interfering in two lovers' relationship.



GREEN TEA: a more sophisticated Tuesday 😊

Pictures or story are illustrations only.

Abstract Words

Refer to ideas or concepts that cannot be seen or touched such as *fairness, freedom, work*

Example: "happiness"



<https://juravin.com/research/what-is-happiness-for-you/>

Concrete Words

Refer to specific things that can be seen. Concrete words minimize misunderstanding.

Example:
Puppy, Kitten



Team Talk in Groups

Team Talk

- The language group members use as they work together to achieve group goal
- Language that reveals where the group is coming from and where it is going
- Language that builds group relationships

Anne Donnellon, *Team Talk*

The 06 Dimensions of Team Talk

Term	Definition
Identification Talk	Use plural rather than singular pronouns. Members use plural pronouns rather than singular ones when talking about the group and its work.
Interdependence Talk	Use collective language such as we and our. Members use language that acknowledges shared needs, solicits opinions, and expresses the need for collaboration.
Balanced Power Differentiation Talk	Use considerate and equitable language. Members talk to one another on equal terms.
Social Equality Talk	Use casual, informal language. Members use casual language, nicknames, slang. Members express empathy and liking and avoid titles.
Conflict Management Talk	Use collaborative, nonjudgmental language. Members express interest in solving problems, use a nonthreatening tone and nonjudgmental language, and paraphrase others.
Negotiation Talk	Use exploratory and problem-solving language. Members ask "What if?" questions, propose objective criteria for solutions, and summarize areas of agreement.

The 06 Dimensions of Team Talk

Match the Team Talk Mini-Test

1. Please go to <https://play.kahoot.it/>
2. Use the given Game PIN
3. Add your nick (need to be your real name and student ID (last 4 digits). E.g., Anh Khoi 2103

Or sign in the Kahoot App on your smart phone.

Team Talk Techniques



Let's list out
the rest...

- Use the pronouns *we*, *us*, and *our* when referring to the group and its work.
- Express shared rather than individual needs: “We need to...” rather than “I want....”.
- Ask group members to use your first name / nickname.
- Speak in a specific and active voice
- Express disagreement and listen patiently to dissenters.
- Ask more “What if?” questions and make fewer “We can’t do it” statements.
- Rephrase or ask questions when in doubt.
- Don’t talk more, interrupt more, or ask more questions than other members if you are a group leader.

Finding Assess Your Group's Team Talk

- **Do members talk to one another on equal terms?**

Very often

Sometimes

Rarely

- **Do members express empathy and liking?**

Very often

Sometimes

Rarely

- **Do members use nonjudgmental language?**

Very often

Sometimes

Rarely

- **Do members paraphrase one another?**

Very often

Sometimes

Rarely

Appropriate Personal Pronouns

Use *I*, *You*, and *We* Language

I - Take responsibility for feelings and actions, but don't overuse and appear self-centered.

You - Don't shift responsibility from yourself to others.

We - Use inclusive plural pronouns; share credit for group achievements.



Language Difficulties & Examples

Bypassing

Example:

- ----- I'll give you the report next Friday.
- ----- I'll do it when possible.

Offensive Language

Example:

- ----- You're stupid to do so.
- ----- I don't wanna talk to you. Raghead!

Jargon

Example:

- ----- Tomorrow, we'll see the BOD and discuss about the NPD, MCP, and the SOP as well. Please prepare yourself.

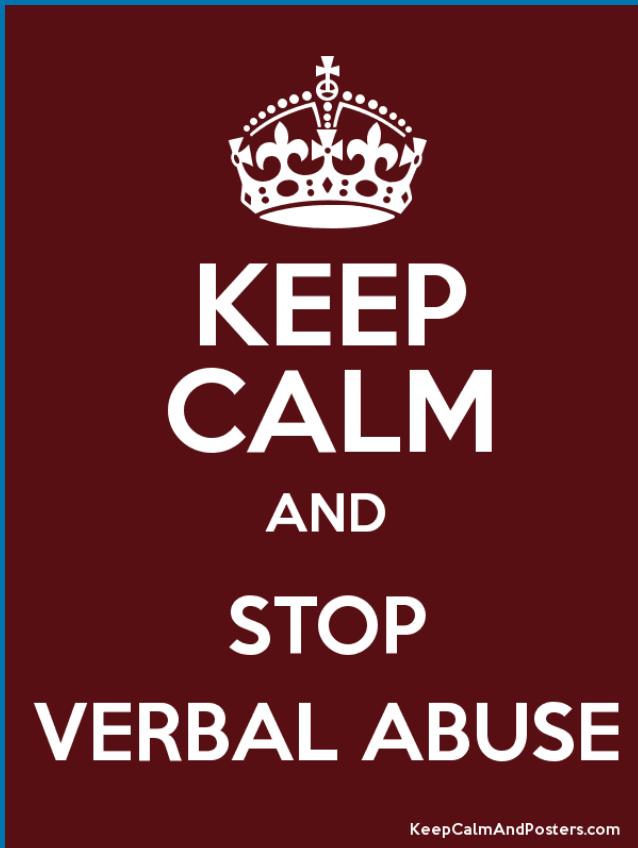
Language Difficulties & Examples

Verbal Abuse

Forms of Verbal Abuse	Example
Tone of Voice .	Harsh, sarcastic, angry
Content .	Cruel comments, racial slurs
Language .	Foul or obscene words <small>/faʊl/ /əb'si:n/</small>
Nonverbal Cues .	Insulting facial expressions
Volume .	Loud, screaming voice or hissed messages



Language Difficulties & Examples



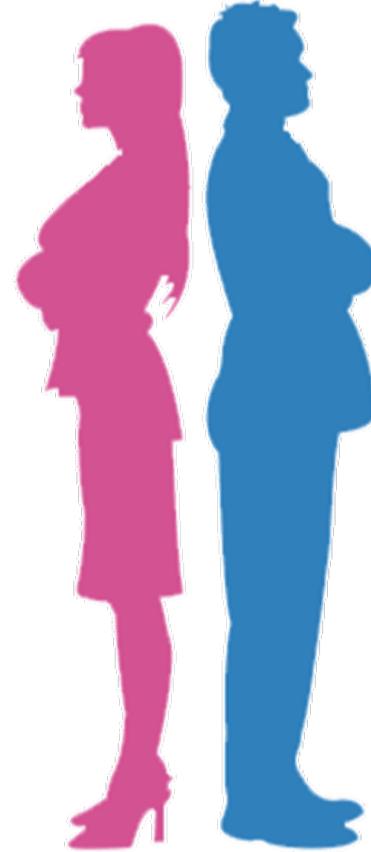
/kɜːrb/

How to Curb Verbal Abuse

- Ask for repetition: "Please repeat that."
- Physically step back from the person.
- Express your objections.
- Quote the law.
- Take a time out.
- Practice what you preach.
- Listen.

Language and Gender

- Females tend to use language to maintain relationships and cooperate with others.
Qualifiers – “maybe,” “perhaps,” “really,
Tag questions – “The answer is 4. Right?”
“Let’s not meet tonight. Is that okay?”
- Males tend to use direct and forceful language to assert their ideas and compete with others.



Codeswitching

Codeswitching is the ability to change from the dialect of your own culture and adopt the language of the majority in a particular situation.

People may learn *codeswitching* to avoid negative stereotypes about them based on their dialect.

- An **accent** is the sound of one language imposed on another language.
- A **dialect** is the distinct regional and cultural variations in vocabulary, pronunciation, syntax, and style that distinguishes speakers from different ethnic groups, geographic areas, and social classes.



Quiz

Research on dialects, reveals that . . .

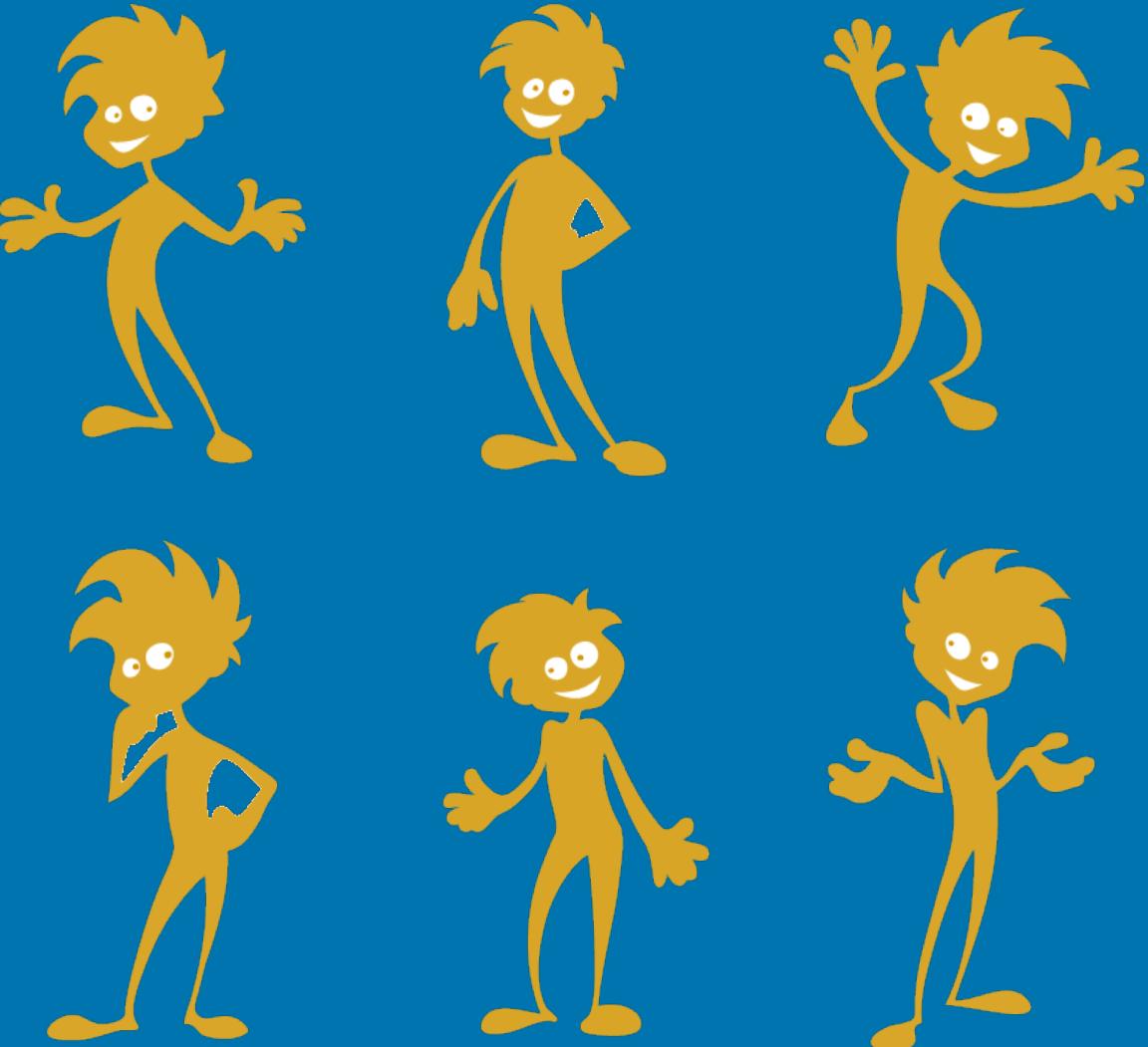
- a) People judge others by their dialect.
- b) People seeking career success often change their dialect to Standard American Speech.
- c) Standard American Speech is most accepted by most of the American culture.
- d) We should be aware of dialect 'prejudices and look beyond the surface when judging others.
- e) All of the above.

Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal Communication

- The behavioral elements of messages other than the actual words spoken.

≥50% of all meaning is communicated nonverbally.



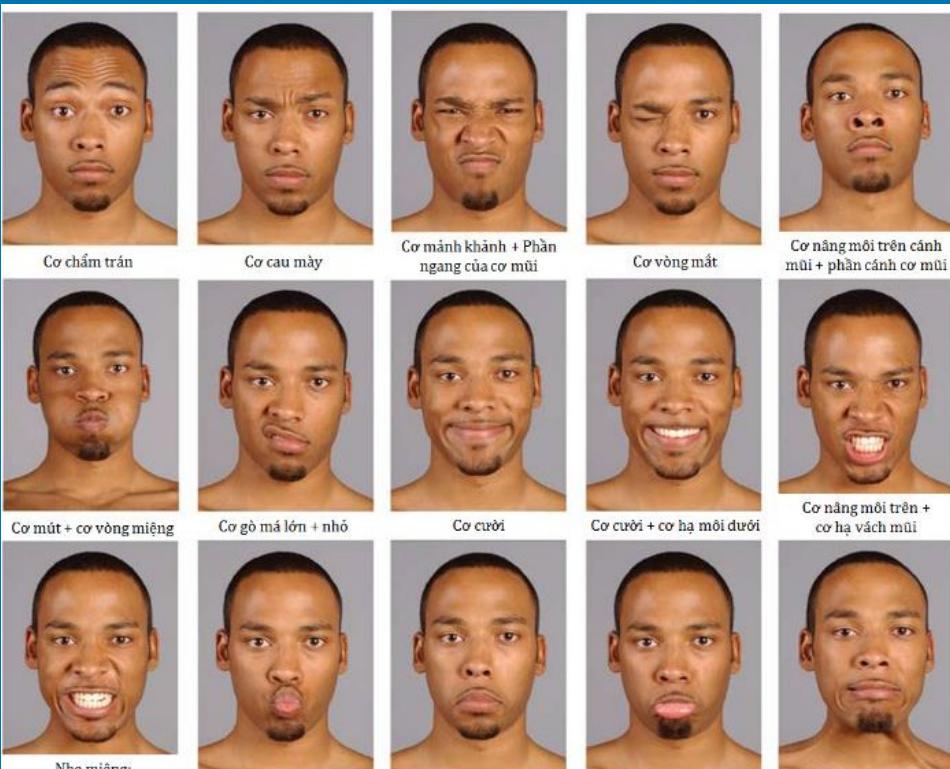
Nonverbal Communication

Types of Nonverbal Communication

- **Personal Appearance**
- **Facial Expression and Eye Contact**
- **Vocal Expression** (pitch, rate, volume, word stress)
- **Physical Expression** (movement, posture, touch)
- **Environment** (arrangement of space, use of personal space)



Nonverbal Communication



Facial Expression

- We can produce more than 1,000 different facial expressions.
- Facial expressions allow non-speakers to contribute to ongoing group discussions.
- The Significance of Eye Contact:
 - Lack of eye contact may be perceived as rudeness, indifference, nervousness, or dishonesty.
 - Eye contact norms are culturally determined.
 - Eye contact influences interaction in small groups.

Nonverbal Communication

Facial Expression – An Interesting Clip

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0ouAnmsO1Y>

Nonverbal Communication

Physical Expression

/kai'ni:siks/

Kinesics - The study of body movement and physical expression

Touch can express encouragement, support, or happiness.

Interaction between **touch approachers** and **touch avoiders** can create misunderstandings.



Nonverbal Environment

Seating Arrangements

Classroom Seating

Make direct eye contact among group members difficult or impossible; inhibit group interaction, cooperation, and collaboration.

More Interaction

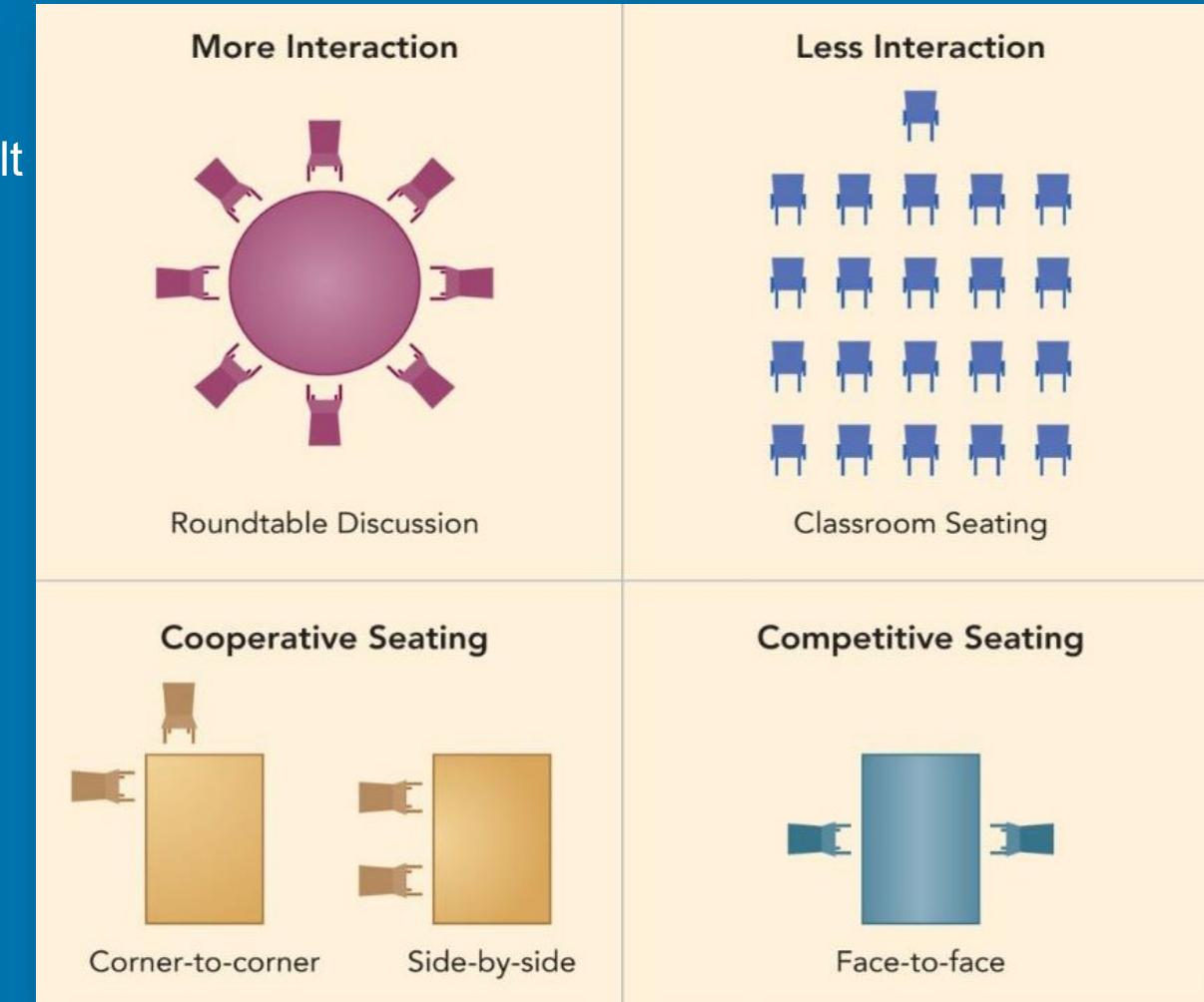
All members sit in equally important positions; allow members to engage in direct eye contact; promote group interaction, cooperation, and collaboration.

Cooperative Seating

Members sit side-by-side; promote more interaction, cooperation, and collaboration.

Competitive Seating

Members sit across from each other, can provoke competition rather than cooperation and collaboration.



Nonverbal Environment



Quiz

Task-oriented leaders are likely to sit at the head of a table; socially-oriented leaders are likely to sit . . .

- a) in the middle position at the side of a table.
- b) at various places around the table in order to sit side-by-side with every member.
- c) at the head of a table.
- d) next to a task-oriented member who can keep the leader on track.

Choice of seating position in groups:

- **For cooperative activities:** Sit corner-to-corner or side-by-side
- **For competitive activities:** Sit across from one another
- **Task leaders** sit at the head of a table
- **Social leaders** sit in the middle of a side

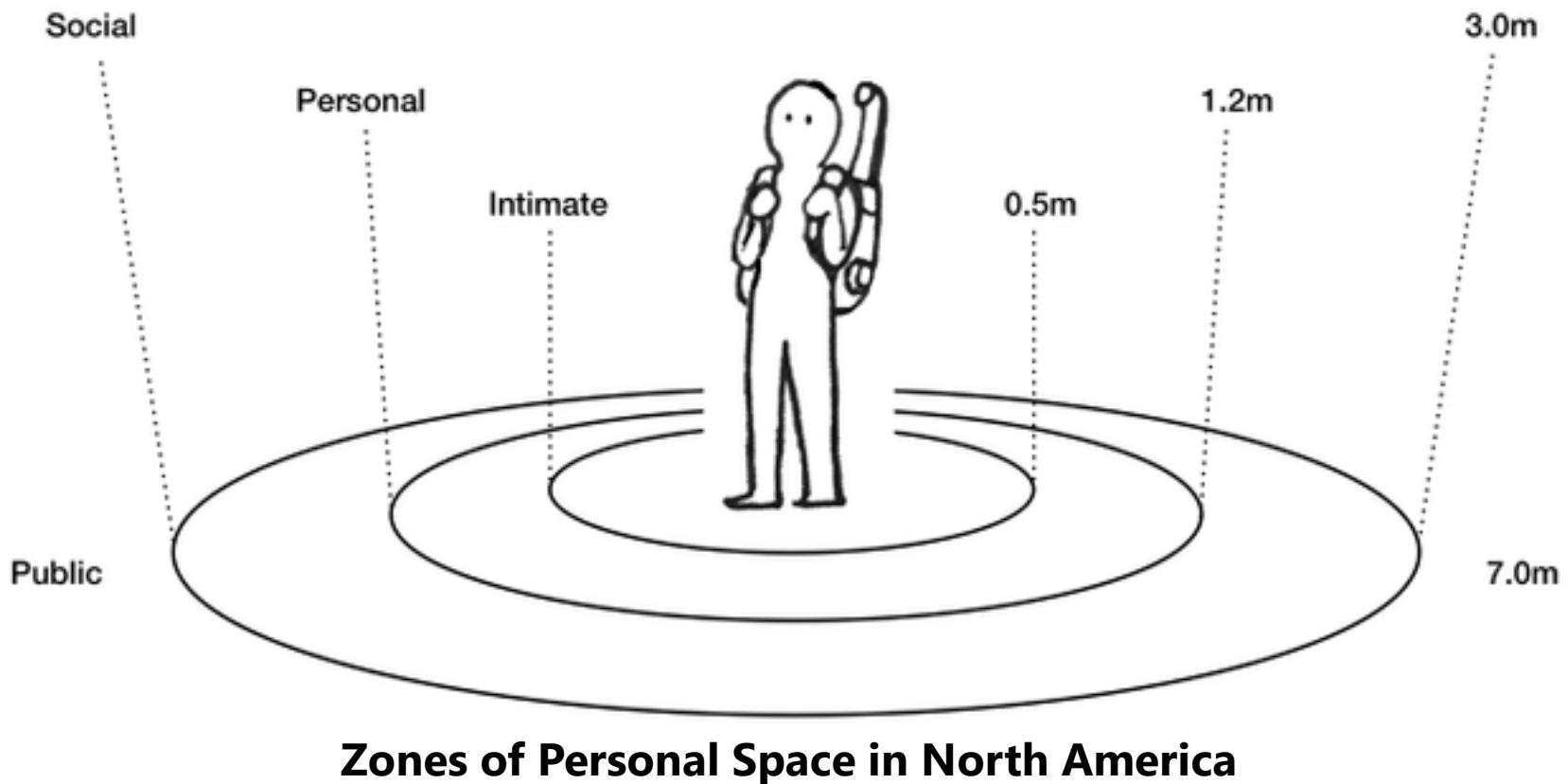


Territoriality

The sense of personal ownership that is attached to a particular space

- Examples:
Your usual seat in a classroom or meeting room and marking your territory with objects (purse, book, coat, food).
- Members who fail to respect the territory of others violate an important group norm.

Territoriality



Personal Space



Quiz

At what distance do members of most well-established groups interact?

- a) Intimate distance
- b) Personal distance
- c) Social distance
- d) Business distance
- e) Public distance

Nonverbal Communication and Gender

Women tend to

- Use more facial expression
- Smile more
- Use more eye contact
- Use more expressive movements
- Touch others more (especially other women)
- Notice nonverbal behavior more



Men tend to

- Use more expansive movements
- Appear more relaxed
- Appear less involved
- Touch others less (especially other men)
- Shake hands more
- Use a larger personal distance



Create a Supportive Communication Climate

- A group's climate is the degree to which members feel comfortable interacting.
- Jack Gibb describes six dialectic behaviors that influence whether a group's climate is supportive or defensive.

Group Climate Dialectics (Jack Gibb)

Supportive Climate

- Description

- Problem Orientation

- Spontaneity

- Empathy

- Equality

- Provisionalism

Defensive Climate

- Evaluation

- Control

- Strategy

- Neutrality

- Superiority

- Certainty



Quiz

What type of supportive or defensive response is illustrated in the statement: “That’s a stupid way to approach the problem”?

- a) Descriptive
- b) Evaluative
- c) Problem-oriented
- d) Strategic
- e) Empathic

Nonverbal Immediacy

- Leaning forward
- Physical closeness to others
 - Eye contact
- Openness of arms and body
 - Touching
- Direct body orientation
 - Relaxed posture
- Positive facial & vocal expressions
 - Laughing and smiling





**Communication can support or
destroy your group's productivity!**

**Now we already know what makes a
well-behaved team member!**



THANK YOU