TÉCNICO LISBOA

Communication Skills I

1º semestre (P1)

In-Class Activity
Topic: Non-Verbal Communication
Week 3 [24-27 September]

Prof. Cláudia Silva

In-Class Activity: Judging by Nonverbal Communication in Tech Environments

Objective:

To help you, as computer science or telecommunications students, understand how your nonverbal communication—such as posture, gestures, and facial expressions—can influence the perceptions of others, it's important to recognize the role this plays in professional or technical settings, like during team collaborations or job interviews. These subtle cues can lead to assumptions and judgments that impact how you are perceived by colleagues and potential employers.

Timeframe:

- 30 minutes

Group Size:

- Groups of 5 students

Activity Breakdown:

1. **Introduction and Group Discussion (5 minutes):**

   o **Prompt: The group should discuss the following questions:** *Have you ever judged someone by their appearance or body language before speaking to them? What kinds of nonverbal cues affected your perception? How do you think this happens in professional settings like tech teams or interviews?*

   o Share examples from your own experience, especially when interacting with peers, instructors, or during internships.

2. Group Scene Creation (Preparation: 10 minutes):

o Task: In your groups, you'll create a short scene where a character is judged purely based on their nonverbal communication rather than what they say. The setting can be tech-related (e.g., a job interview, team meeting, hackathon, code review).

You don't have to choose the scenarios below. They are suggestions. You can also come up with your own scenario.

o **Example Scenario 1: Job Interview**

▪ A candidate walks into the room, slouches, avoids eye contact, and speaks quietly during introductions. The interviewers make assumptions about their confidence and technical ability before even reviewing their skills.

o **Example Scenario 2: Team Meeting**

▪ A team member consistently folds their arms, doesn't participate in the discussion, and rolls their eyes. The team assumes they are disengaged and uninterested in the project, despite the person being highly competent.

o **Roles: Your group should assign the following roles:**

▪ 1–2 characters: who will display nonverbal cues leading to judgment.

▪ 1–2 characters: who will interpret these cues and make judgments.

▪ Optionally, a narrator to guide the audience through what's happening.

o **Preparation:** Students should rehearse for 5 minutes, focusing on physical expressions (e.g., posture, facial expressions, gestures) without relying heavily on dialogue.

3. Performance (10 minutes):

o Your group performs your short scene (1–2 minutes) for the class.

o Your group should encourage the audience to watch carefully and note what they inferred about the characters from their nonverbal behavior.

4. Class Debrief and Reflection (5 minutes):

o **After the performance, your group should discuss with the class:**

▪ *What judgments were made based solely on nonverbal cues?*

▪ *How could these judgments affect someone in a tech workplace?*

▪ *Were these judgments fair? How can nonverbal communication lead to misunderstandings?*

Tip: Your group should highlight the impact of nonverbal communication in settings like job interviews, team projects, and technical presentations, where first impressions or perceived engagement can influence professional outcomes.