

Non Verbal Communication

Definition, Importance and Inevitability-

Non Verbal communication happens through gestures and body language. It is not only a more expressive form of communication but also allows us to express our love, hatred, likes, dislikes, respect and many other feelings without using words.

Words are relatively easy to control. Whereas paying attention to non-verbal cues can judge a person (speaker) intention, honesty and credibility. Non Verbal cues include all sorts of body language like facial expressions, hand movements, eye contacts etc., which are very difficult to control as they come out of impulse and that is why they are efficient in giving a clear picture of a person's mindset.

A) KINESICS: (body language i.e. facial expressions, posture, hand movements, eye contacts etc.)

Kinesics is the study of body language, the way people sit or stand communicates a lot about their attitudes, emotions etc. Posture portrays confidence, anxiety, fear, aggressiveness and a host of other emotions. Various gestures have different meanings and are understood by public at large in different ways. Example:

- i. The way we use our spoon or hands gives a clear impression of our living style and background.
- ii. When we tell someone, “Come, sit” followed by hand movements it implies warm or cold welcome depending upon the way the body language is used.
- iii. Patting an employee to encourage him/ her to keep talking whereas shuffling through the papers to discourage him talking, convey different emotions.
- iv. Slouching in the chair conveys a laidback attitude and at the same time it also shows that a person is relaxed.

The face's role in communicating various messages can also not be ignored i.e. brows, eyes, the root of the nose, the lower face etc. are all capable of conveying different attitudes and emotions.

Example: To express surprise, one raises eyebrows and opens his eyes wide, whereas fear is expressed with raised eyebrows and tensed facial expressions. Similarly, eye contact also varies by culture. Some Latin American cultures prohibit a direct eye contact, whereas other cultures indicate nervousness and lack of confidence if an eye contact is avoided.

B) PROXEMICS: (Space is used in communication)

Proxemics is the study of how people use the physical space around them and what this use tells about them. People often put an invisible boundary between themselves and others. This is called personal feature space. Example: The intimate distance zone within the radius of upto 18 inches (18") is reserved for close relatives and friends.

C) PARA LANGUAGE: (Vocal behaviour and its impact on verbal communication)

The study of Para language focuses on how you say what you say. The tone of your voice, its loudness, softness, rate of speech and the words we (emphasise) accentuate communicate a great deal. In fact by changing the emphasis in a sentence we change the total meaning of the sentence.

Para Language has several components:

1. Voice Quality- It includes cottage rate of speech/ pace and pronunciation.
2. Volume- High volume doesn't mean shouting. It means being audible to people sitting even in the last rows. Volume can be varied to make a seminar or any public speaking more lively and interesting.

3. Voice Pitch- Pitch is the natural quality of a voice which can only be changed after a lot of practice. Low pitched voice is a good quality voice which commands attention and respect as it indicates that the speaker is in total control of the situation. Whereas a high pitched voice is throatal and shrill voice which pierces the listener's ears and drives them away. Some breathing exercises can help us in getting a low pitched, deep routed voice.

4. Rhythm- It refers to a pattern of voice. A smooth rhythm or flow of speech with a low pitch indicates confidence and authoritative convey lack of clarity.

5. Pronunciation & Enunciation- Good pronunciation is correct oral and delivery of a word. Enunciation is more a matter of clear articulation. People with poor enunciation or word endings show or even show a lack of confidence.

6. Voice Qualifiers- Temporary variations in pitch, volume and rate of speech are called voice qualifiers.



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