

Nonverbal Communication

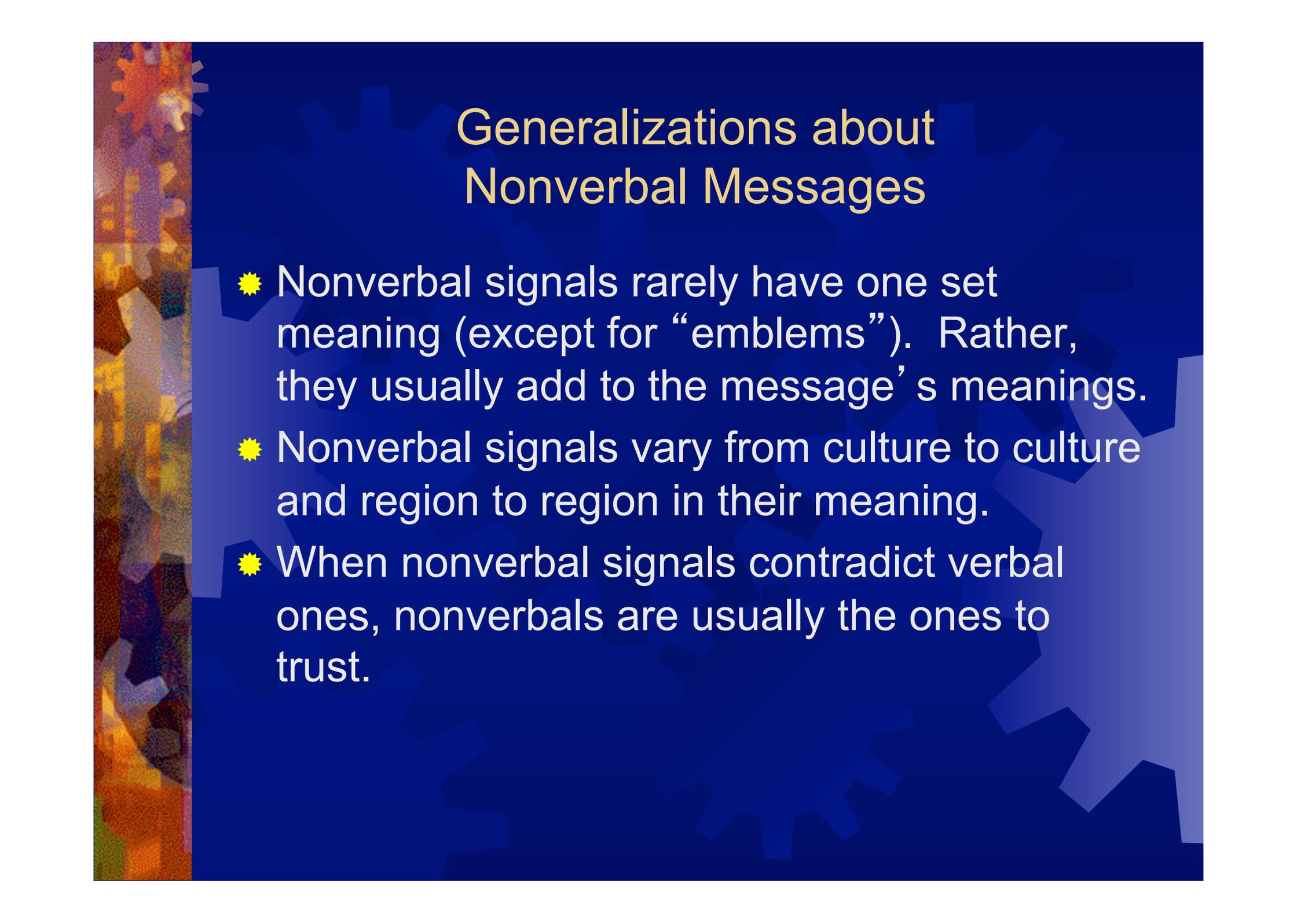
Guide to Cross-Cultural
Communication



Importance of Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbals are a crucial element of managerial communication.

The nonverbal message comprises about 93% of the total message (55% comes from facial expressions and posture of speaker, while vocal aspects [vocalics] deliver 38%, and the actual words deliver only 7%).



Generalizations about Nonverbal Messages

- ✦ Nonverbal signals rarely have one set meaning (except for “emblems”). Rather, they usually add to the message’s meanings.
- ✦ Nonverbal signals vary from culture to culture and region to region in their meaning.
- ✦ When nonverbal signals contradict verbal ones, nonverbals are usually the ones to trust.

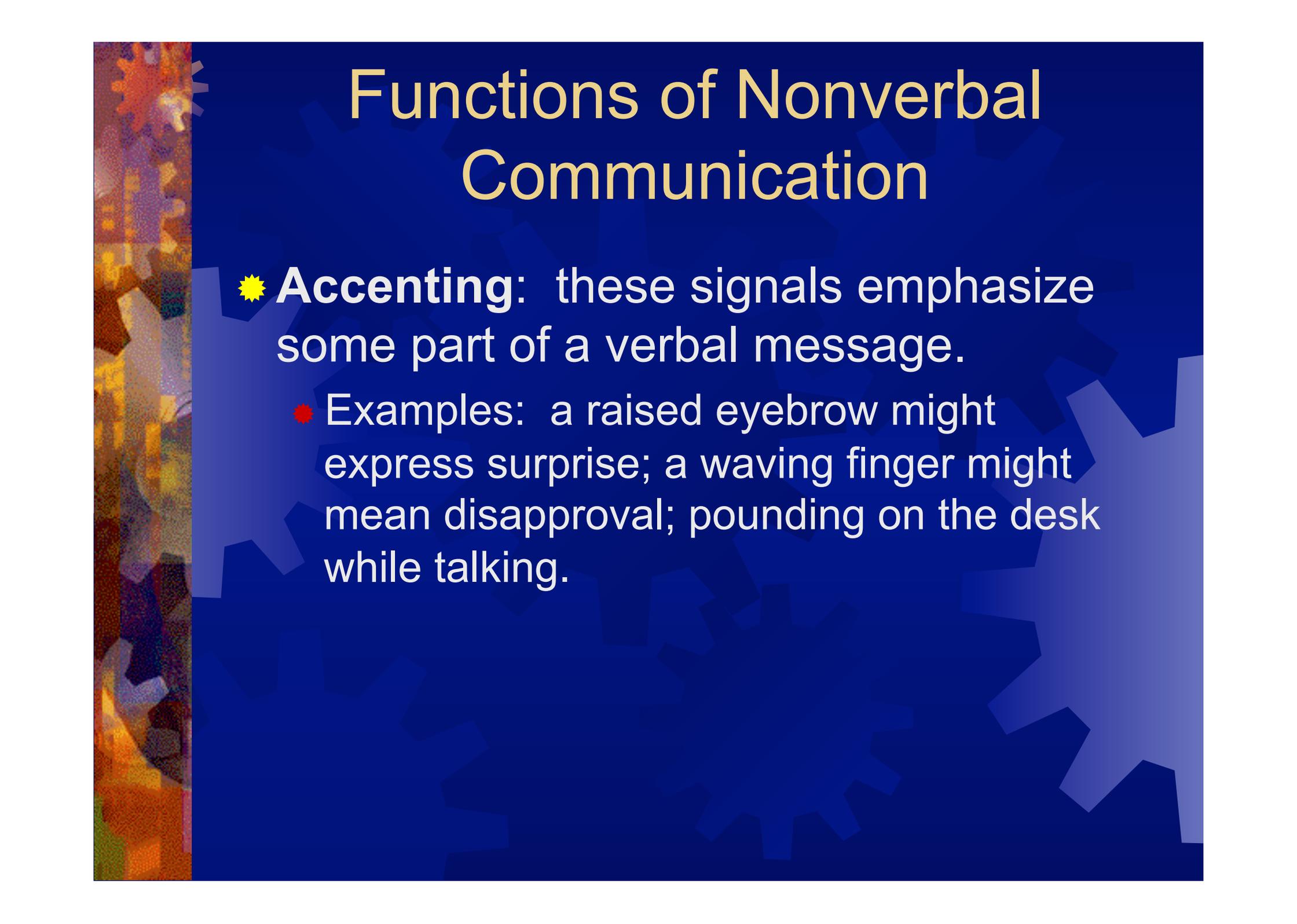


Nonverbal Communication Defined

- ★ Definition: The transfer of meaning without using verbal symbols.

Nonverbal Categories

- ✦ Sign language
- ✦ Action language
- ✦ Object language



Functions of Nonverbal Communication

- ★ **Accenting:** these signals emphasize some part of a verbal message.
 - Examples: a raised eyebrow might express surprise; a waving finger might mean disapproval; pounding on the desk while talking.



Functions of Nonverbal Communication

- ★ **Complementing:** these signals reinforces the general tone or attitude of our verbal communication.
 - Examples: a downcast expression and slumping posture might accompany words of discouragement; upright posture, a smile, & animated movement might reflect the verbal story about getting a promotion.



Functions of Nonverbal Communication

- ✦ **Contradicting:** these signals can contradict the verbal message, sometimes deliberately, sometimes unintentionally.
- ✦ These nonverbal cues will often tell the observer the truth when the verbal cues don't. (Nonverbal leakage of deception)

Examples: tears in our eyes and a quiver in our voice might contradict our verbal message that we're all right. A wink & a nod will send the nonverbal message that we don't mean what we're saying.

Functions of Nonverbal Communication

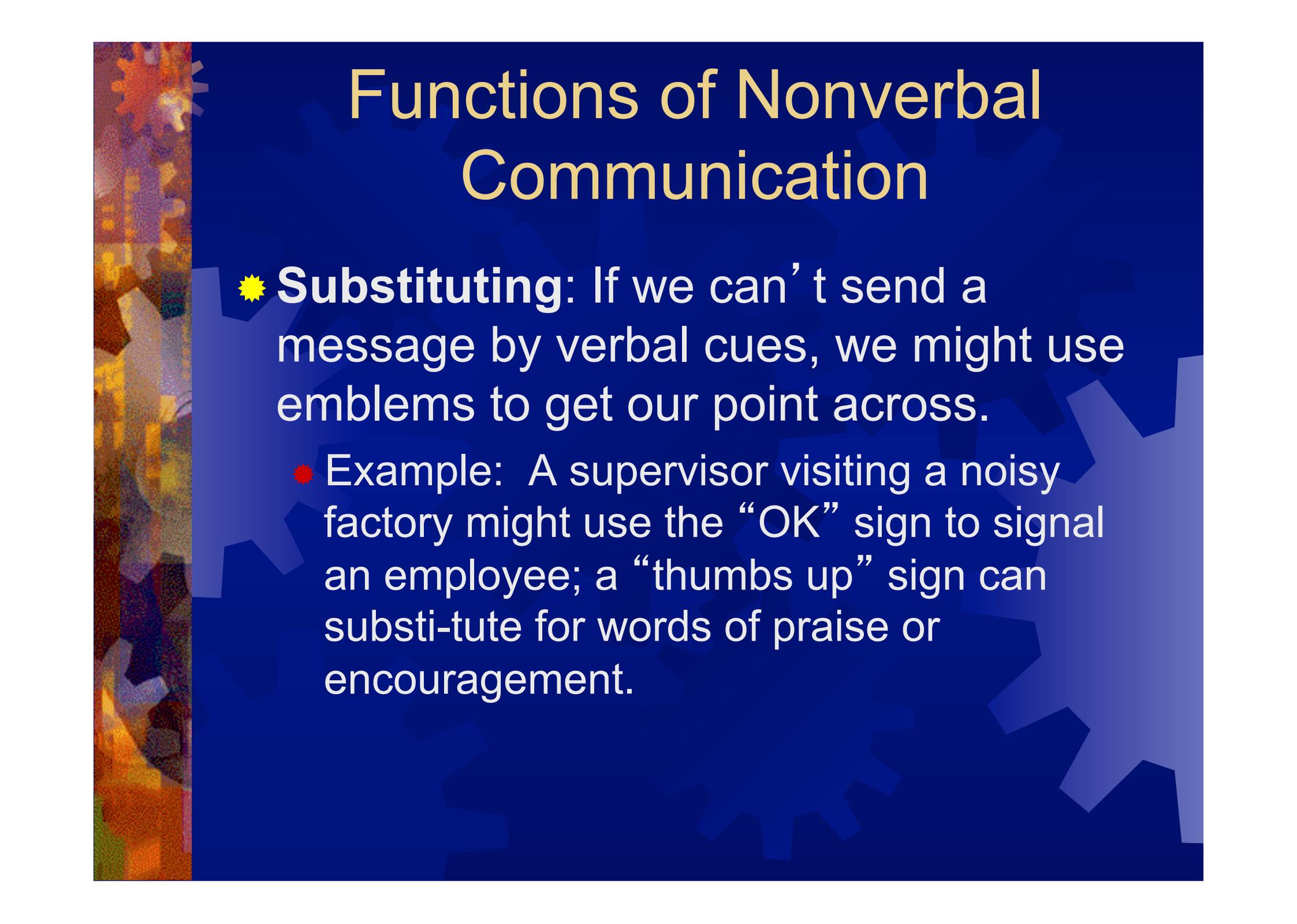
- ✦ **Regulating:** these signals occur during conversations to regulate the flow, the pace, and the back-and-forth nature of verbal communication.
- ◆ These signals could mean “**slow down,**” “**stop,**” and even “**wait your turn**” and let the other person know when we are ready to listen or to speak.

Example: speaker who isn't finished and doesn't want to be interrupted may speak louder or faster to keep his turn.



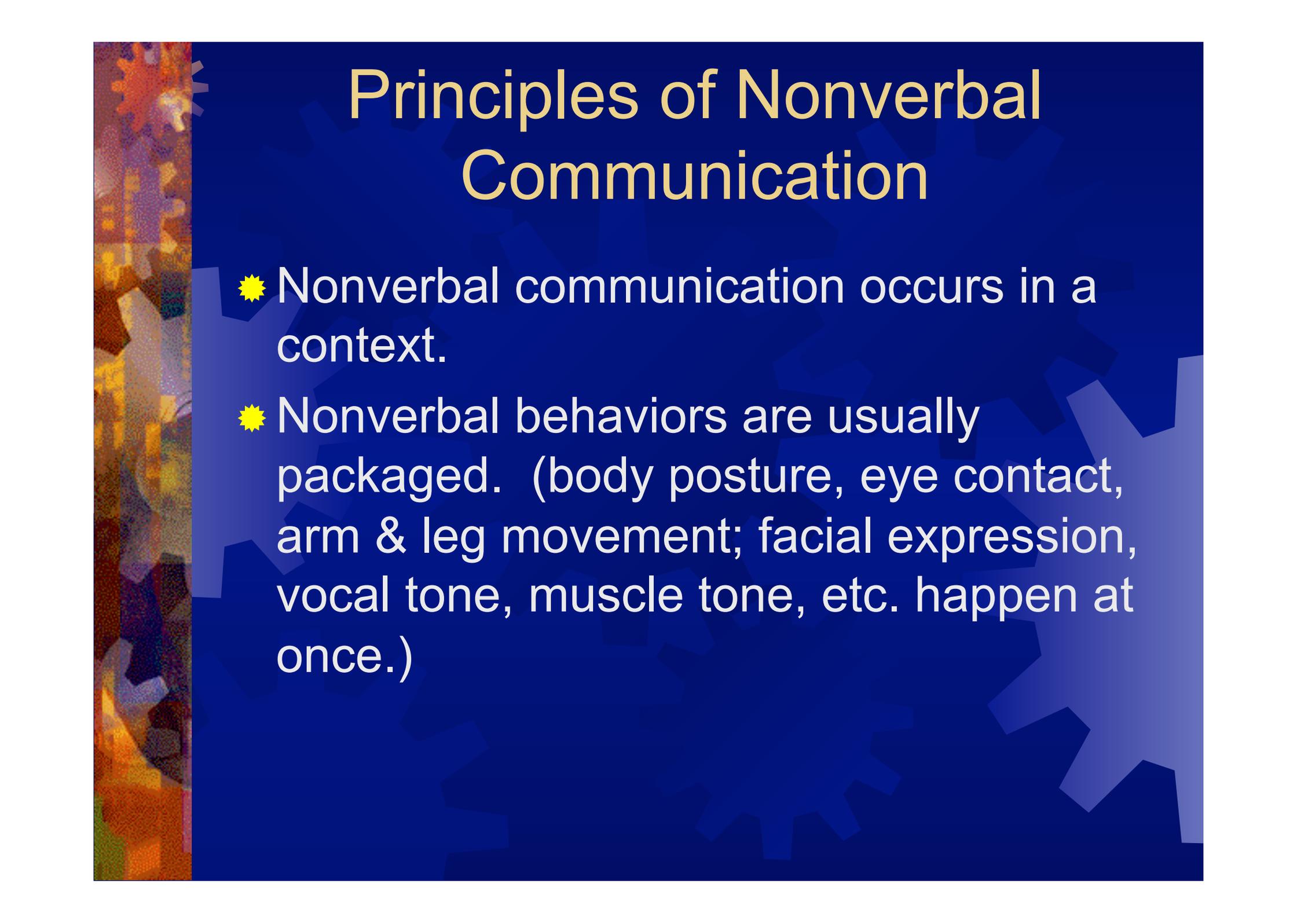
Functions of Nonverbal Communication

- ★ **Repeating:** these signals repeat what verbal messages convey.
 - Example: with keys in hand and coat on, you announce “I’m leaving” as you walk toward the door.



Functions of Nonverbal Communication

- ★ **Substituting:** If we can't send a message by verbal cues, we might use emblems to get our point across.
 - Example: A supervisor visiting a noisy factory might use the “OK” sign to signal an employee; a “thumbs up” sign can substitute for words of praise or encouragement.



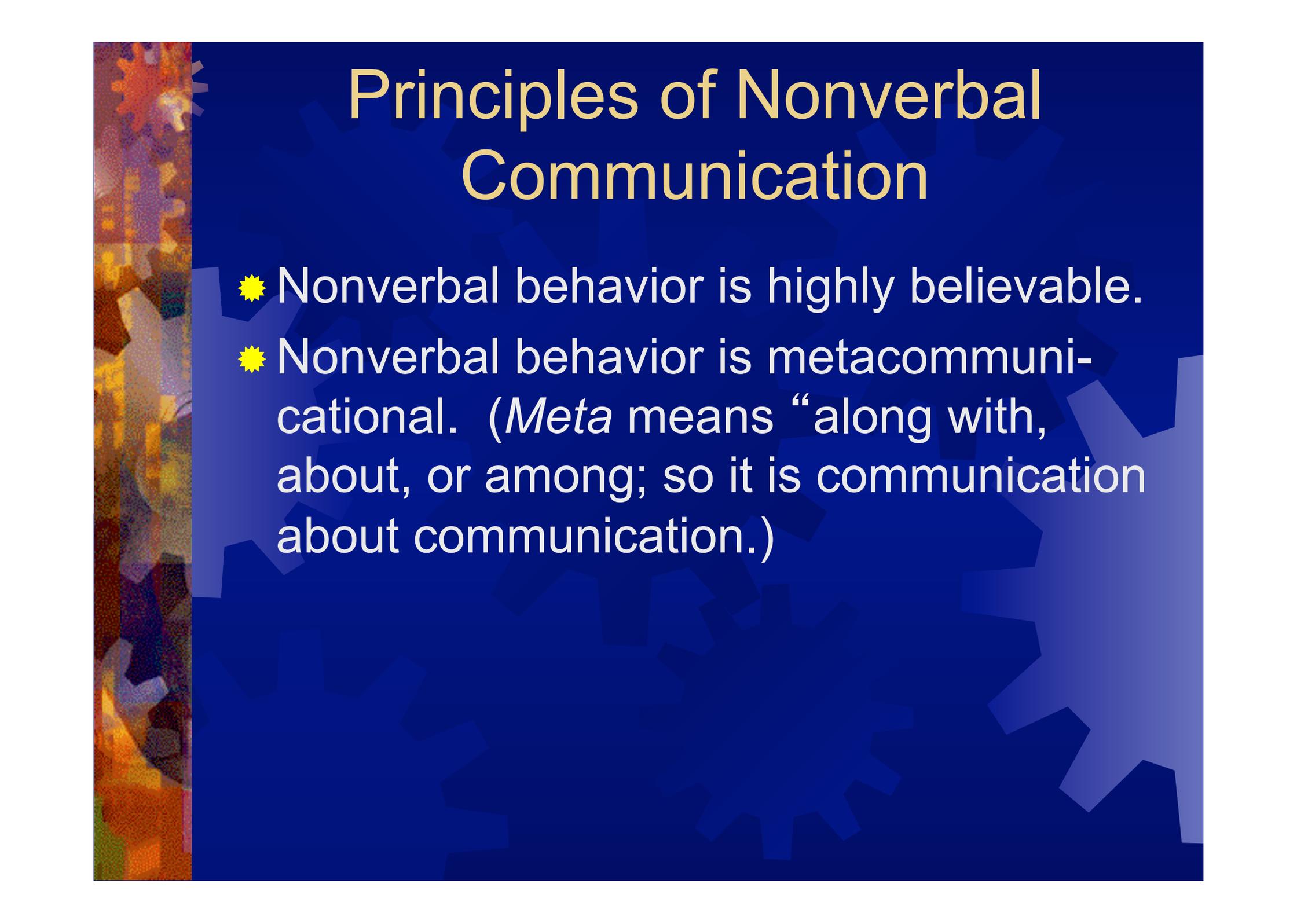
Principles of Nonverbal Communication

- ✦ Nonverbal communication occurs in a context.
- ✦ Nonverbal behaviors are usually packaged. (body posture, eye contact, arm & leg movement; facial expression, vocal tone, muscle tone, etc. happen at once.)



Principles of Nonverbal Communication

- ✦ Nonverbal behavior always communicates.
- ✦ Nonverbal behavior is governed by rules. (Most nonverbal behavior is learned and is a product of our culture in which we are raised, but there are exceptions.)



Principles of Nonverbal Communication

- ✦ Nonverbal behavior is highly believable.
- ✦ Nonverbal behavior is metacommunicational. (*Meta* means “along with, about, or among; so it is communication about communication.”)



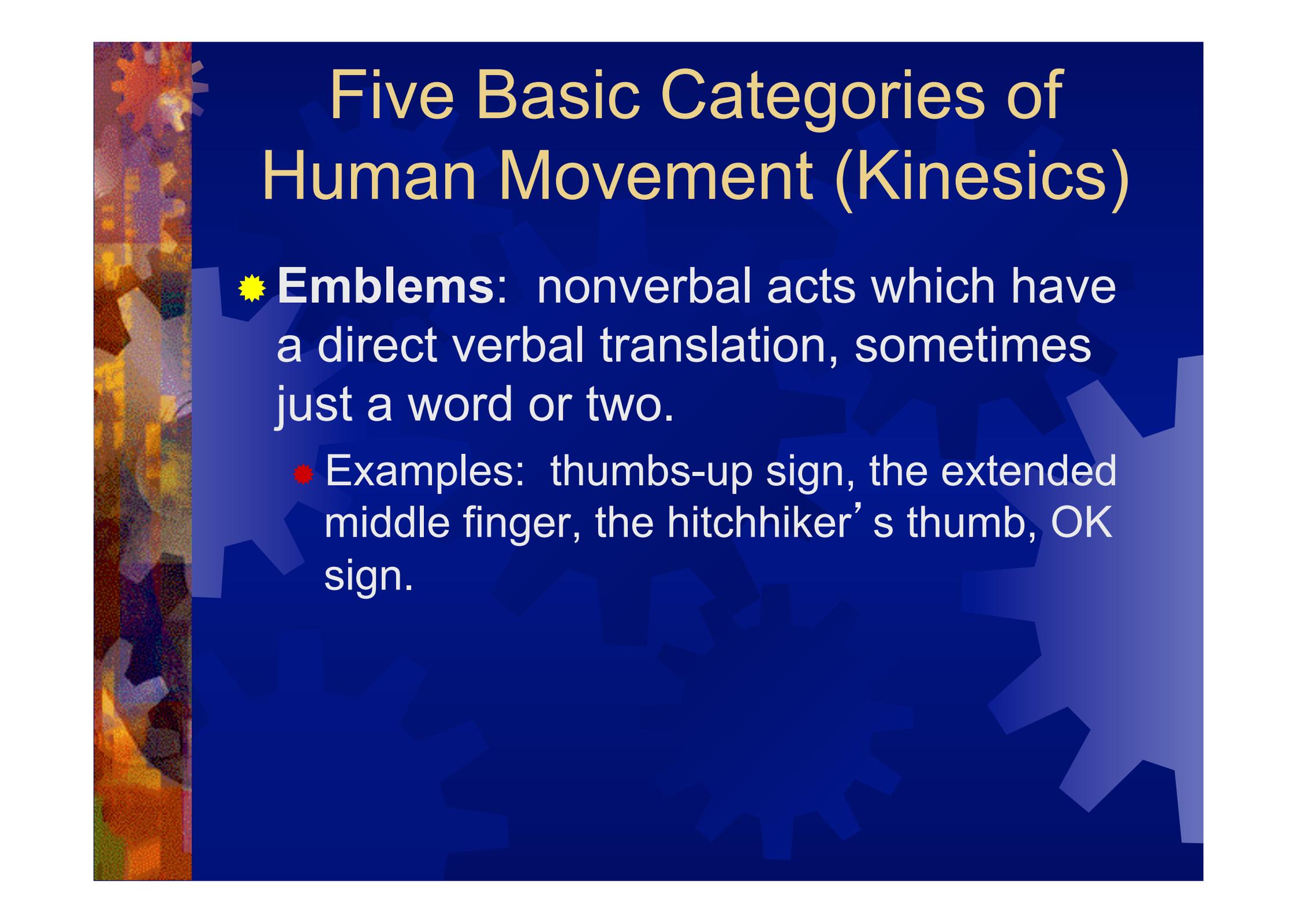
The Communication Environment

- ✦ This refers to that collection of inanimate factors that can and often does influence a human relationship.
 - ✦ Examples: furniture, interior decorating, lighting conditions, colors, temperature, background noise, music.



Kinesics

- ✦ Kinesics is the most studied of the areas of nonverbal communication.
- ✦ It includes body movement (walking, sitting, standing, moving our arms, hands, head, feet, and legs), posture, facial expression, and eye contact.



Five Basic Categories of Human Movement (Kinesics)

- ★ **Emblems:** nonverbal acts which have a direct verbal translation, sometimes just a word or two.
 - Examples: thumbs-up sign, the extended middle finger, the hitchhiker's thumb, OK sign.



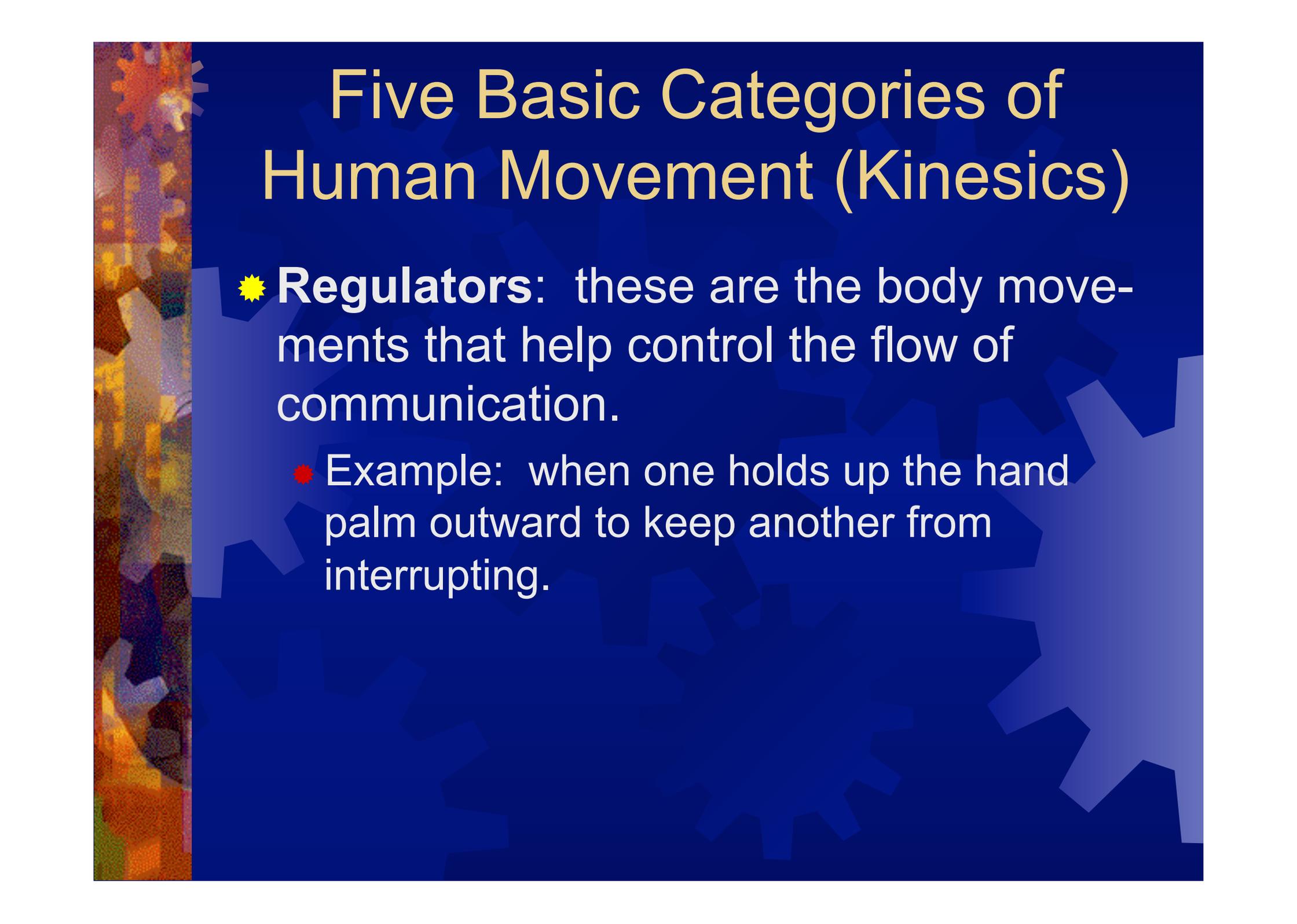
Five Basic Categories of Human Movement (Kinesics)

- ★ **Illustrators:** these are gestures that often complement our verbal signals, helping to illustrate what's being said verbally.
 - ★ **Example:** a fisherman showing how big his fish was that he caught.



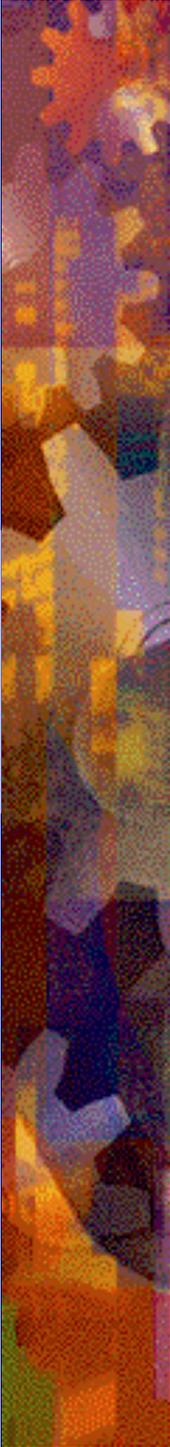
Five Basic Categories of Human Movement (Kinesics)

- ★ **Affect displays:** these are behaviors that indicate the type and intensity of the various emotions that we feel.
 - Example: facial expressions and hand & arm movements are commonly used to communicate emotional states of mind.



Five Basic Categories of Human Movement (Kinesics)

- ★ **Regulators:** these are the body movements that help control the flow of communication.
 - Example: when one holds up the hand palm outward to keep another from interrupting.



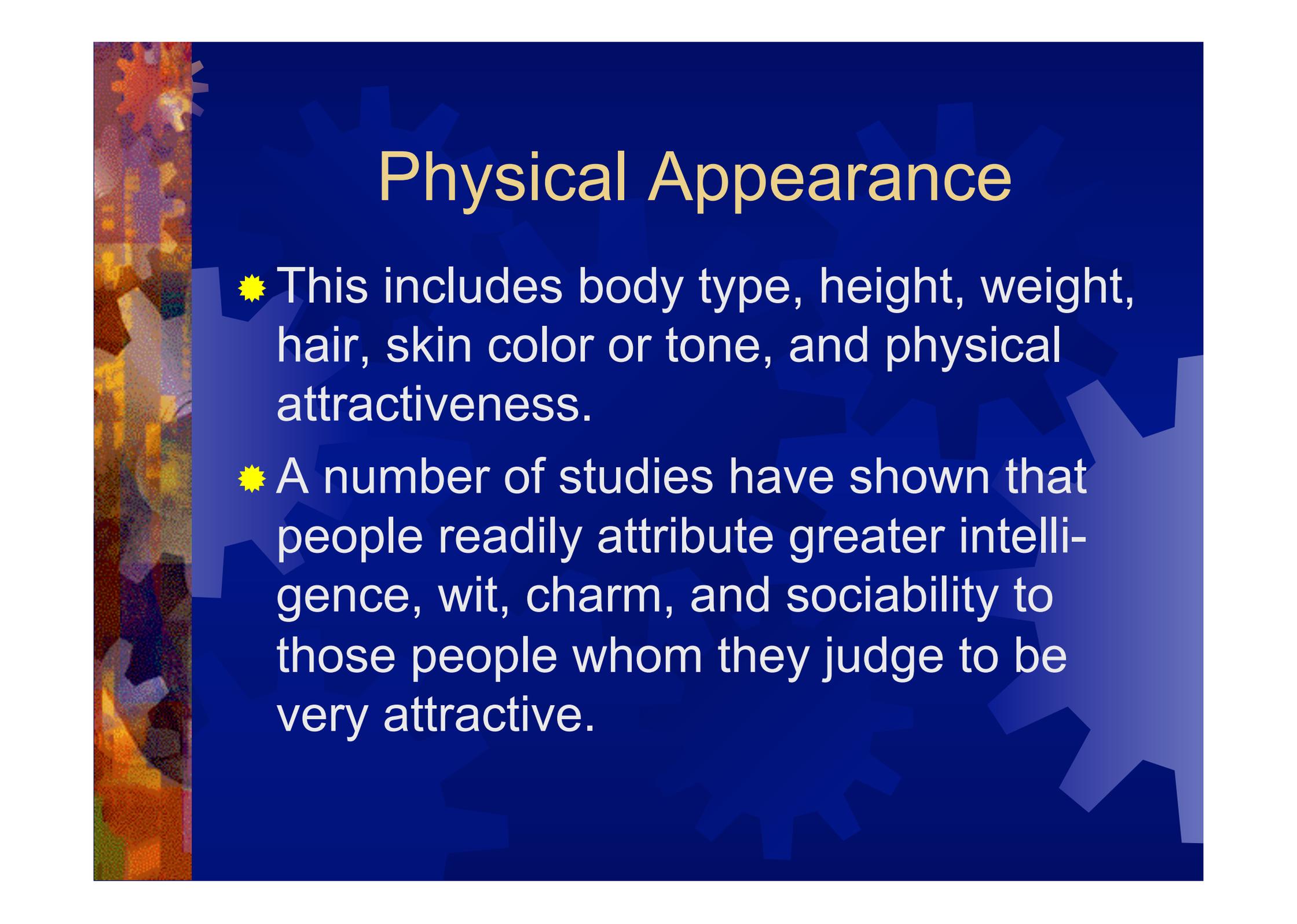
Five Basic Categories of Human Movement (Kinesics)

- ★ **Adaptors:** these are movements or behaviors that involve personal habits and self-expressions. They are methods of adapting or accommodating ourselves to the demands of the world in which we live.
 - ★ Example: the person wishing to leave, but unable to do so, might start to shake his crossed leg in imitation of walking.



Eye Contact

- ✦ Direction, duration, and intensity of gaze are often seen as indicators of interest, attention or involvement between two people, but eye contact varies from one society to another.
 - ✦ Example: In Japan, looking directly into the eyes of a supervisor is a sign of defiance, but in the US, supervisors expect eye contact. In our society, eye contact is associated with honesty and integrity.



Physical Appearance

- ✦ This includes body type, height, weight, hair, skin color or tone, and physical attractiveness.
- ✦ A number of studies have shown that people readily attribute greater intelligence, wit, charm, and sociability to those people whom they judge to be very attractive.

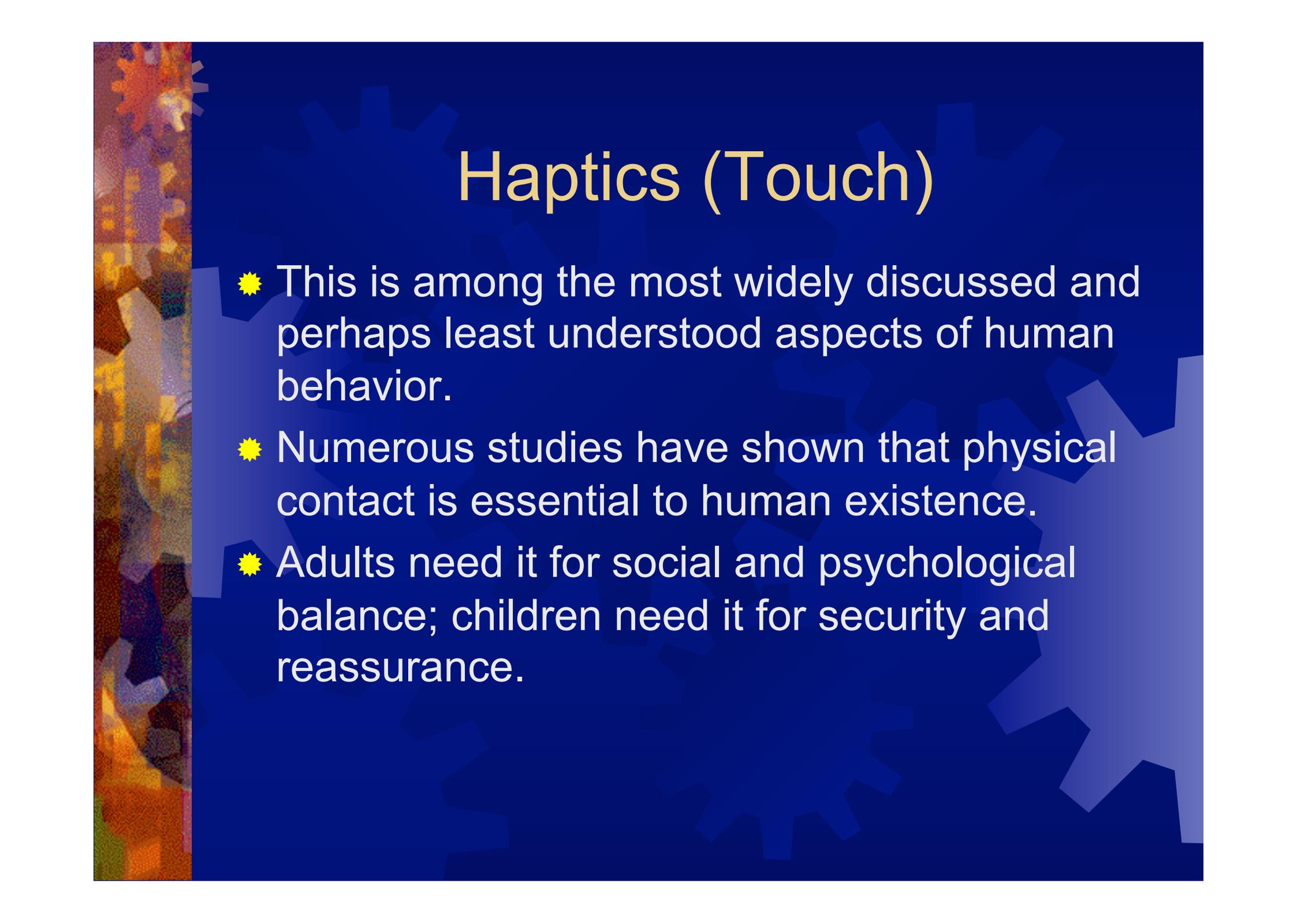


Artifacts

- ★ These are objects that are man-made. These range from clothing, jewelry, eyeglasses to the objects we decorate our offices with.

Dress

- ✦ What we wear says much about who we are.
- ✦ Dress is an important part of the first impression we form in meeting others and is often the key to credibility.
 - ✦ Be neither the first nor the last to adopt a fashion.
 - ✦ Women shouldn't wear clothes that portray them as weak and indecisive
 - ✦ Dress as well as the person at the next level.



Haptics (Touch)

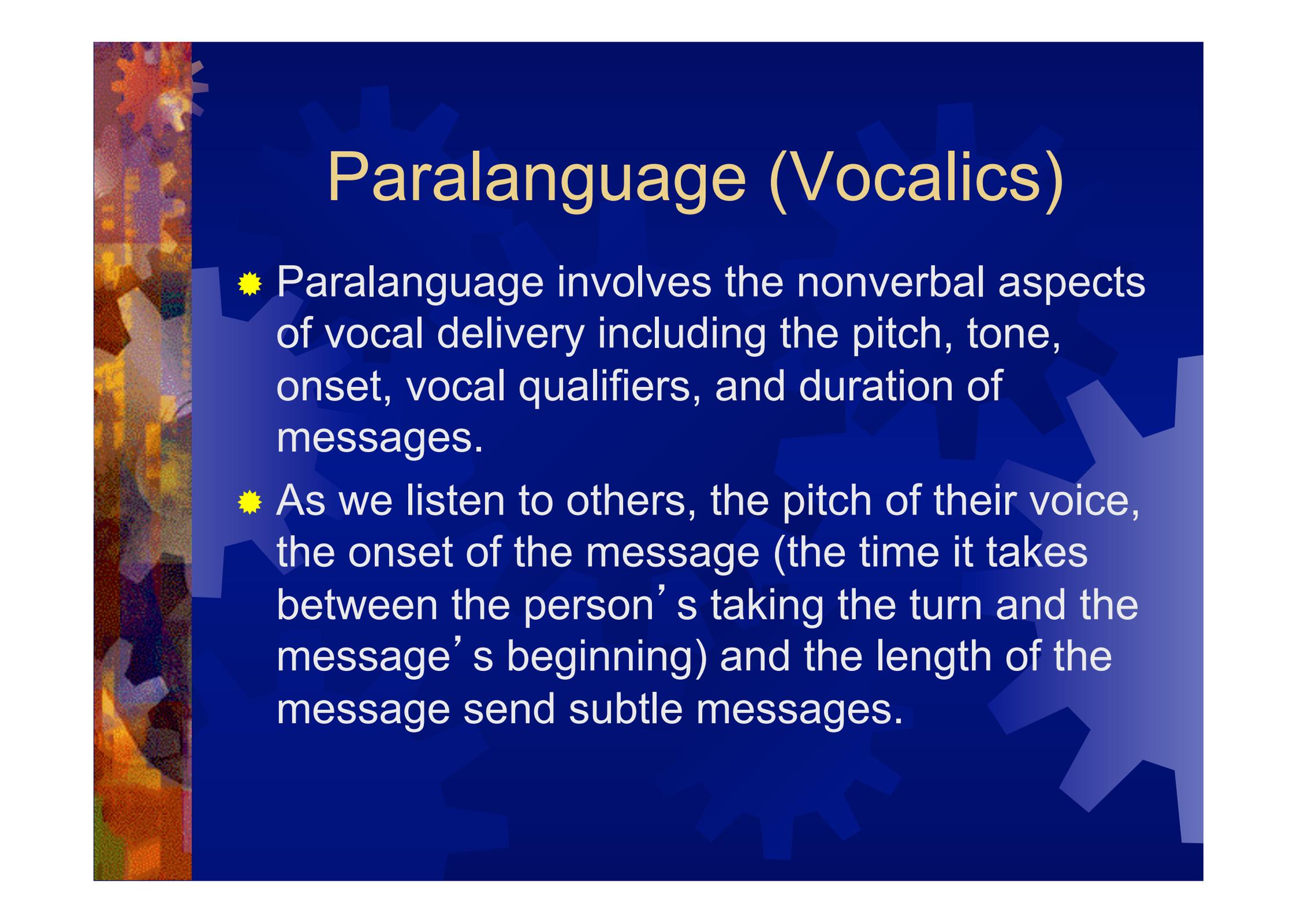
- ✦ This is among the most widely discussed and perhaps least understood aspects of human behavior.
- ✦ Numerous studies have shown that physical contact is essential to human existence.
- ✦ Adults need it for social and psychological balance; children need it for security and reassurance.



Haptics (Touch)

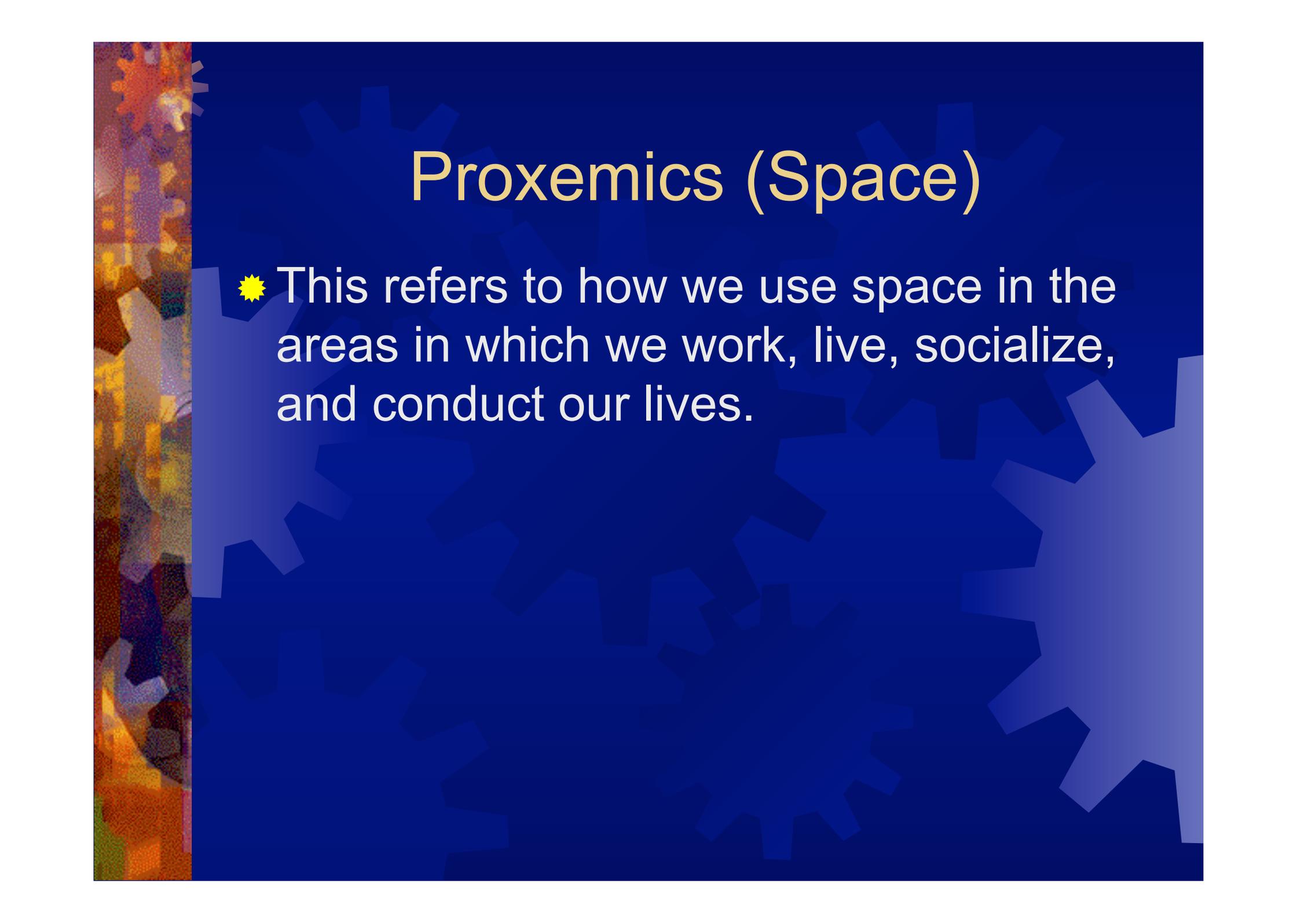
Touching falls into five categories:

1. Functional to serve professional purposes
2. Social to answer the needs of politeness
3. Friendship to build warmth
4. Love to create intimacy
5. Sexual to arouse



Paralanguage (Vocalics)

- ✦ Paralanguage involves the nonverbal aspects of vocal delivery including the pitch, tone, onset, vocal qualifiers, and duration of messages.
- ✦ As we listen to others, the pitch of their voice, the onset of the message (the time it takes between the person's taking the turn and the message's beginning) and the length of the message send subtle messages.



Proxemics (Space)

- ✦ This refers to how we use space in the areas in which we work, live, socialize, and conduct our lives.



Categories of Personal Space

- ✦ **Intimate:** ranges from actual touching to a distance of about 18 inches.
- ✦ **Personal:** in the close phase, about 18 to 30 inches, we can still hold or grasp each other, but only by extending our arms. In the far phase (about 30 inches to 4 feet), two people can touch each other only if they both extend their arms.



Categories of Personal Space

- ★ **Social:** at a distance of about 4 to 12 feet, we lose the visual detail we could see in the personal distance, yet we can easily make eye contact.
- ★ The near phase (4 to 7 feet) is the range at which most business conversations take place. In the far phase (7 to 12 feet) business transactions have a more formal tone and voices are raised slightly.



Categories of Personal Space

- ★ **Public:** in the close phase (about 12 to 15 feet), we feel more protected by space. In the far phase (more than 25 feet), we see people as part of the landscape or scene in the room.
- ★ By understanding proxemic zones, managers can gauge the relative warmth that exists in a relationship by the distances people keep during interactions. As trust grows, distances should diminish.



Differences in Space Categories

- ✦ Proxemic categories (zones) vary from culture to culture.
- ✦ Men tend to maintain larger personal space than do women.
- ✦ Circumstances may artificially affect our use of zones. Example: crowded elevator
- ✦ People will stake out their territory.



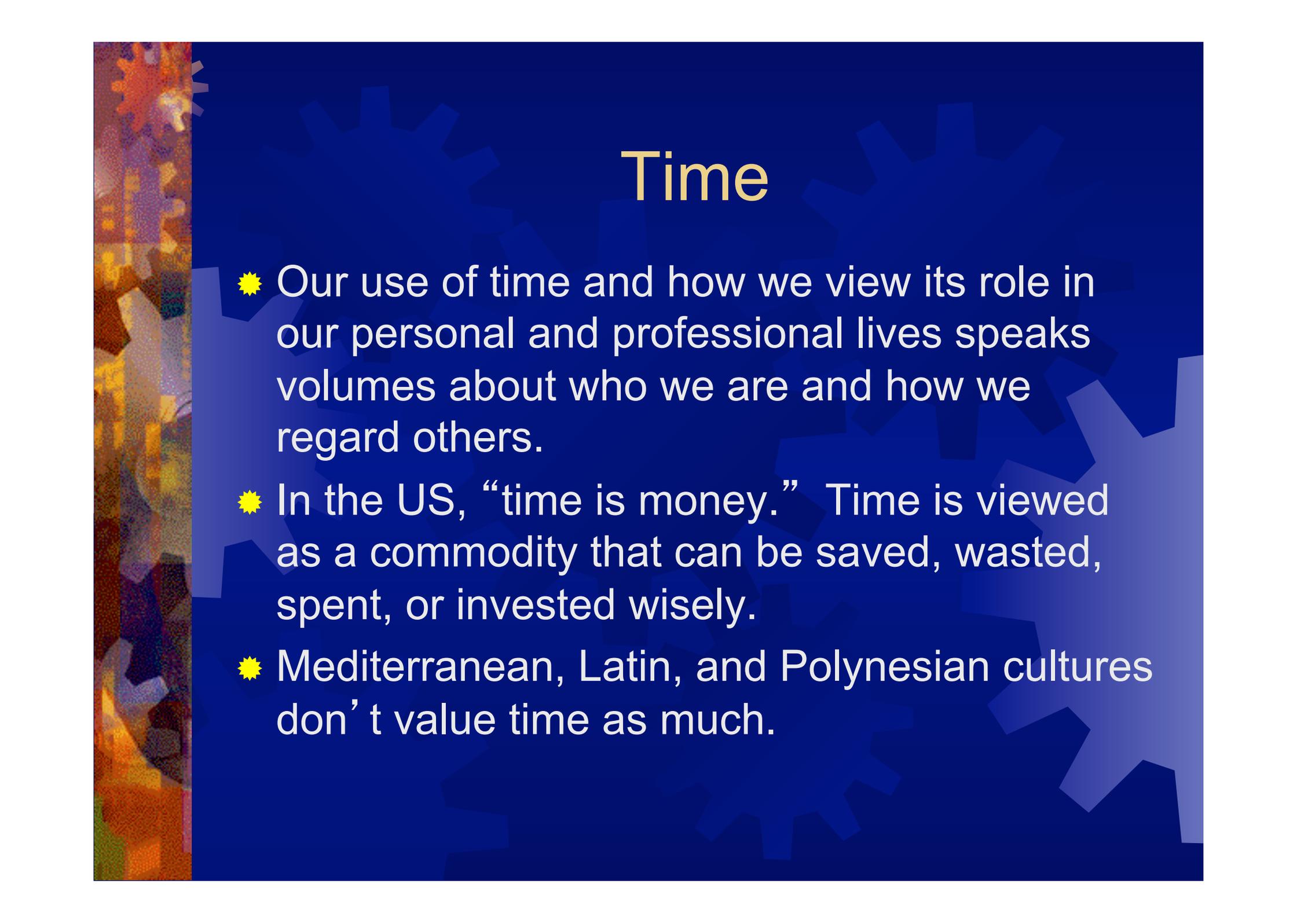
Managerial Implications of Proxemic Zones

- ☀ Managers should be aware that invading someone's territory without invitation can be an annoyance or even a threat.
- ☀ Managers should recognize the boundaries of fixed and semi-fixed space.
- ☀ Experienced managers should be able to “read” the environment for nonverbal clues. Consider the amount of space, amount of privacy, and location of space.



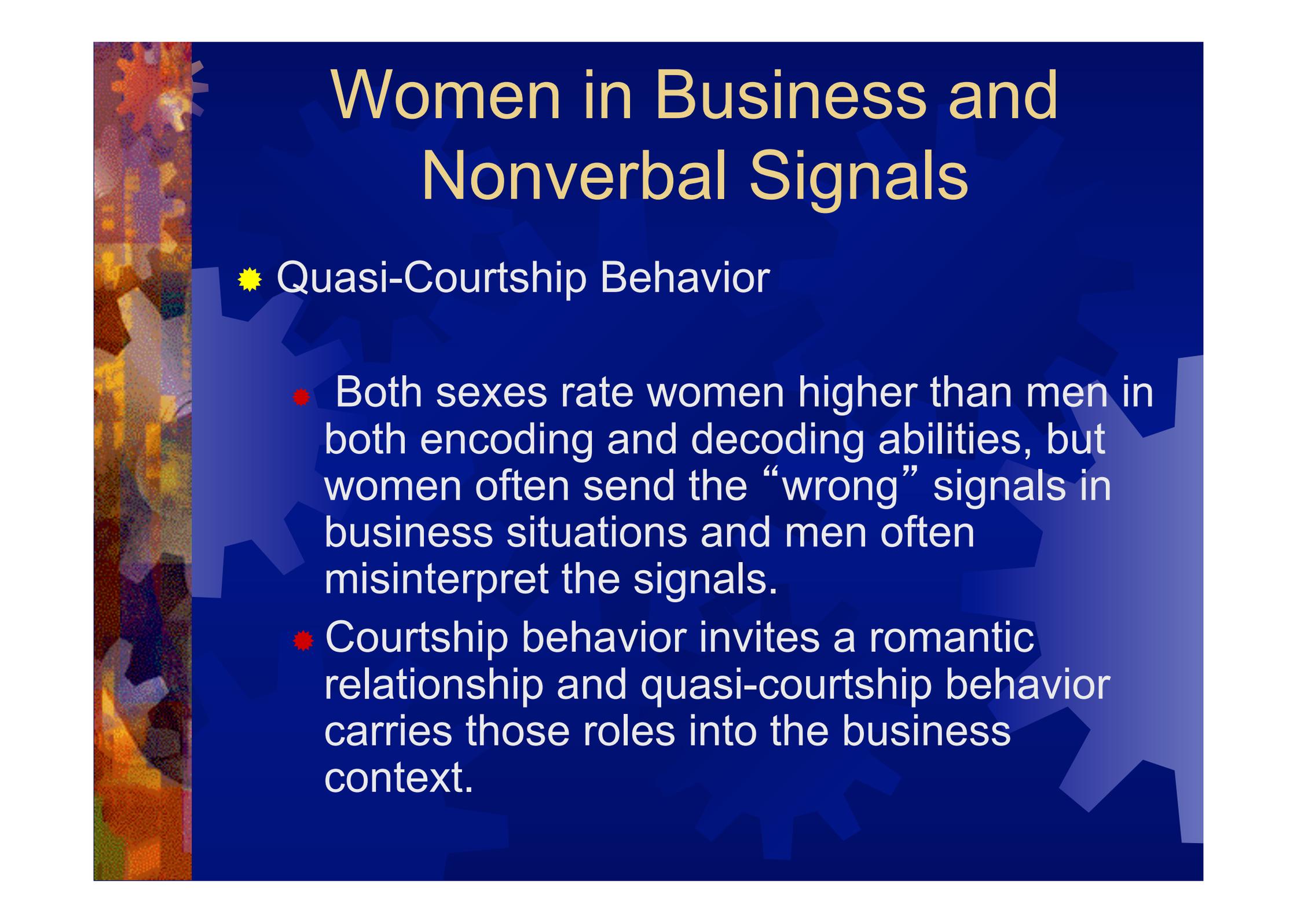
Space in Written Documents

- ✦ Written documents use space in two ways:
 - Physical appearance (texture and color)
 - Layout of words or visuals (Use shorter paragraphs and lots of white space for easier comprehension and retention.)



Time

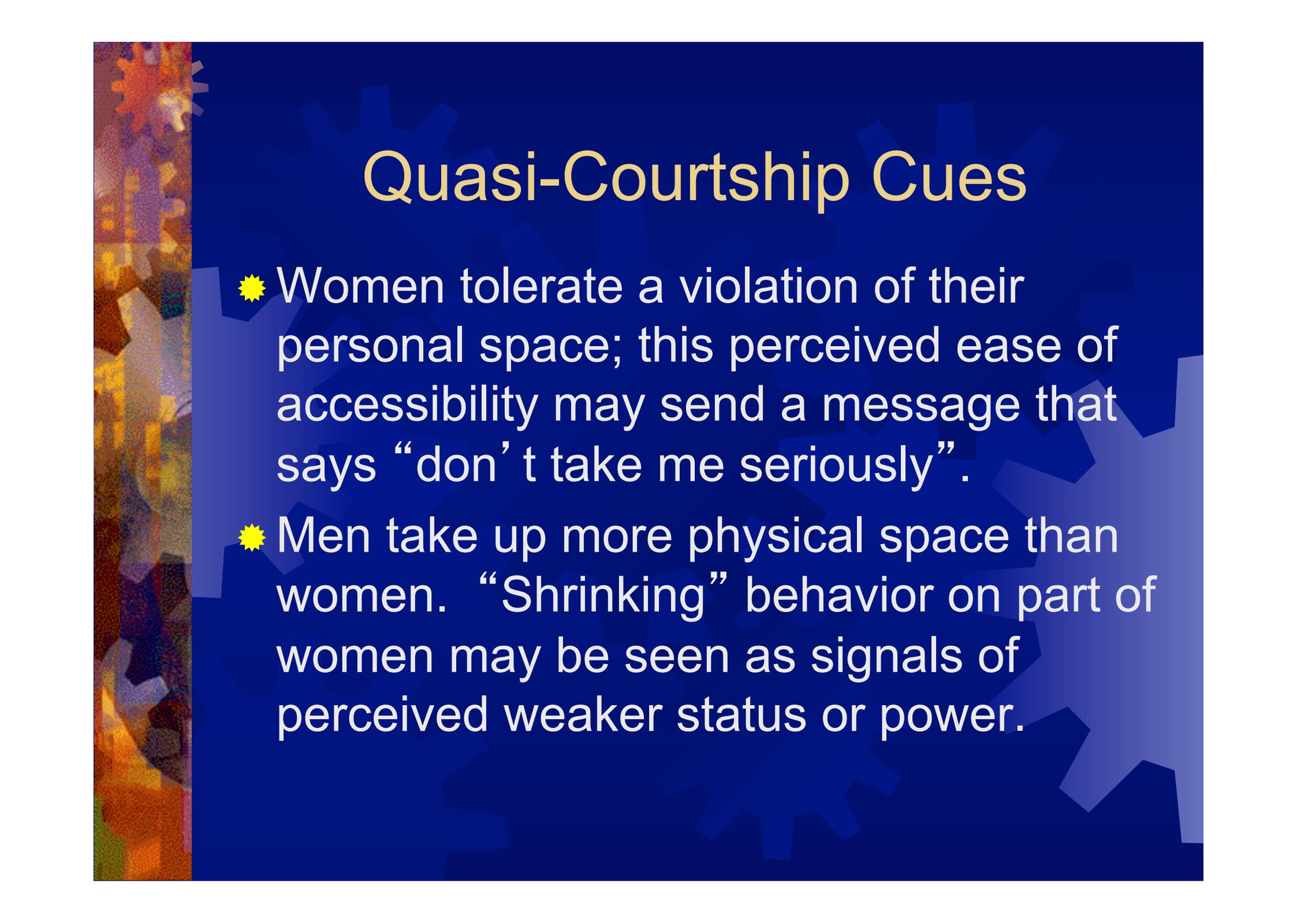
- ✦ Our use of time and how we view its role in our personal and professional lives speaks volumes about who we are and how we regard others.
- ✦ In the US, “time is money.” Time is viewed as a commodity that can be saved, wasted, spent, or invested wisely.
- ✦ Mediterranean, Latin, and Polynesian cultures don't value time as much.



Women in Business and Nonverbal Signals

★ Quasi-Courtship Behavior

- Both sexes rate women higher than men in both encoding and decoding abilities, but women often send the “wrong” signals in business situations and men often misinterpret the signals.
- Courtship behavior invites a romantic relationship and quasi-courtship behavior carries those roles into the business context.

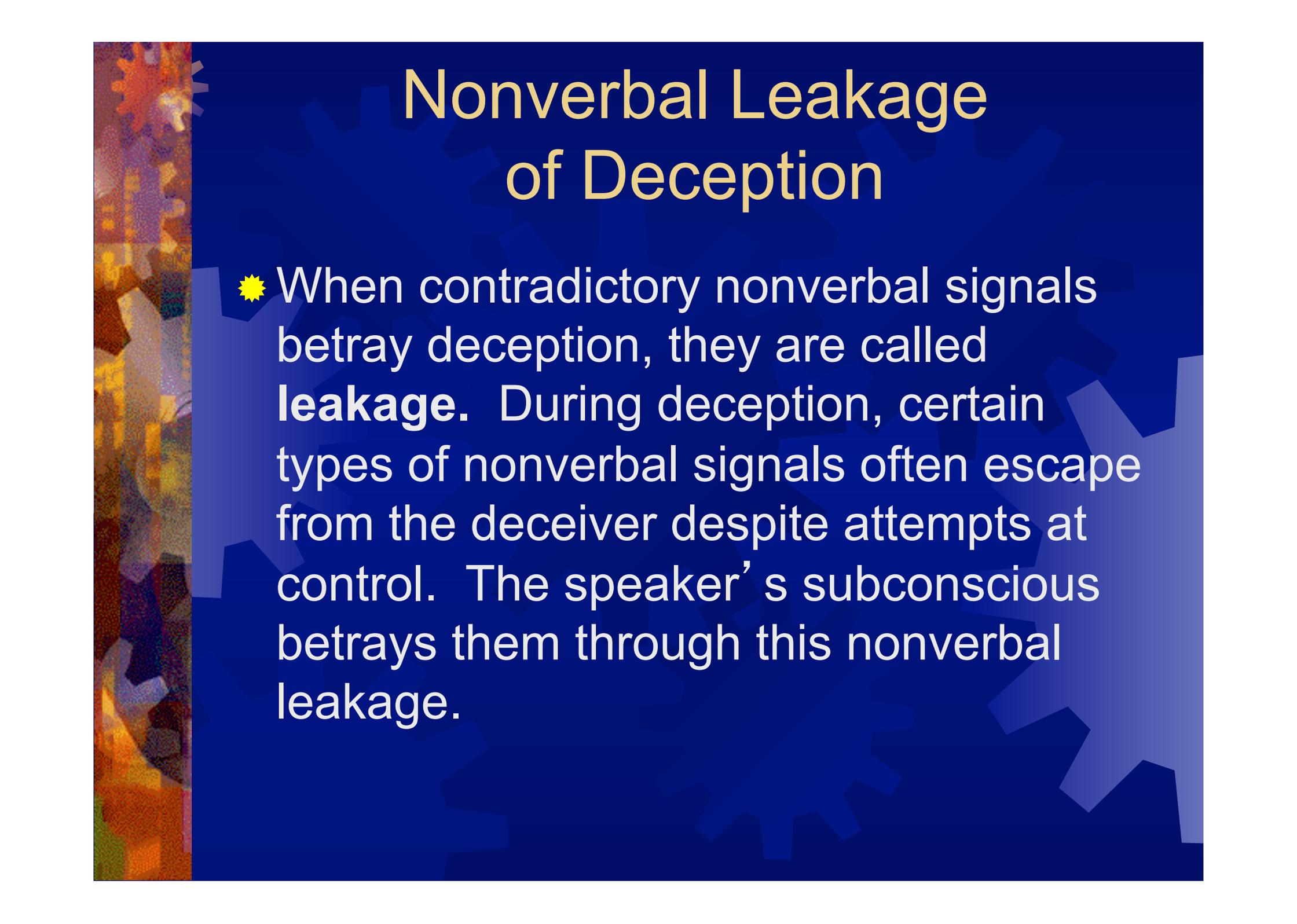


Quasi-Courtship Cues

- ✦ Women tolerate a violation of their personal space; this perceived ease of accessibility may send a message that says “don’t take me seriously”.
- ✦ Men take up more physical space than women. “Shrinking” behavior on part of women may be seen as signals of perceived weaker status or power.

Quasi-Courtship Cues

- ✦ Consider the handshake of men vs. women.
- ✦ Men tend to touch women twice as much as women touch men. Usually, the initiator of impersonal touching possesses greater power and status than the recipient.
- ✦ Women smile and giggle or laugh too much and may not be taken seriously
- ✦ Women maintain eye contact longer than men, but men perceive it as a sign of affection.



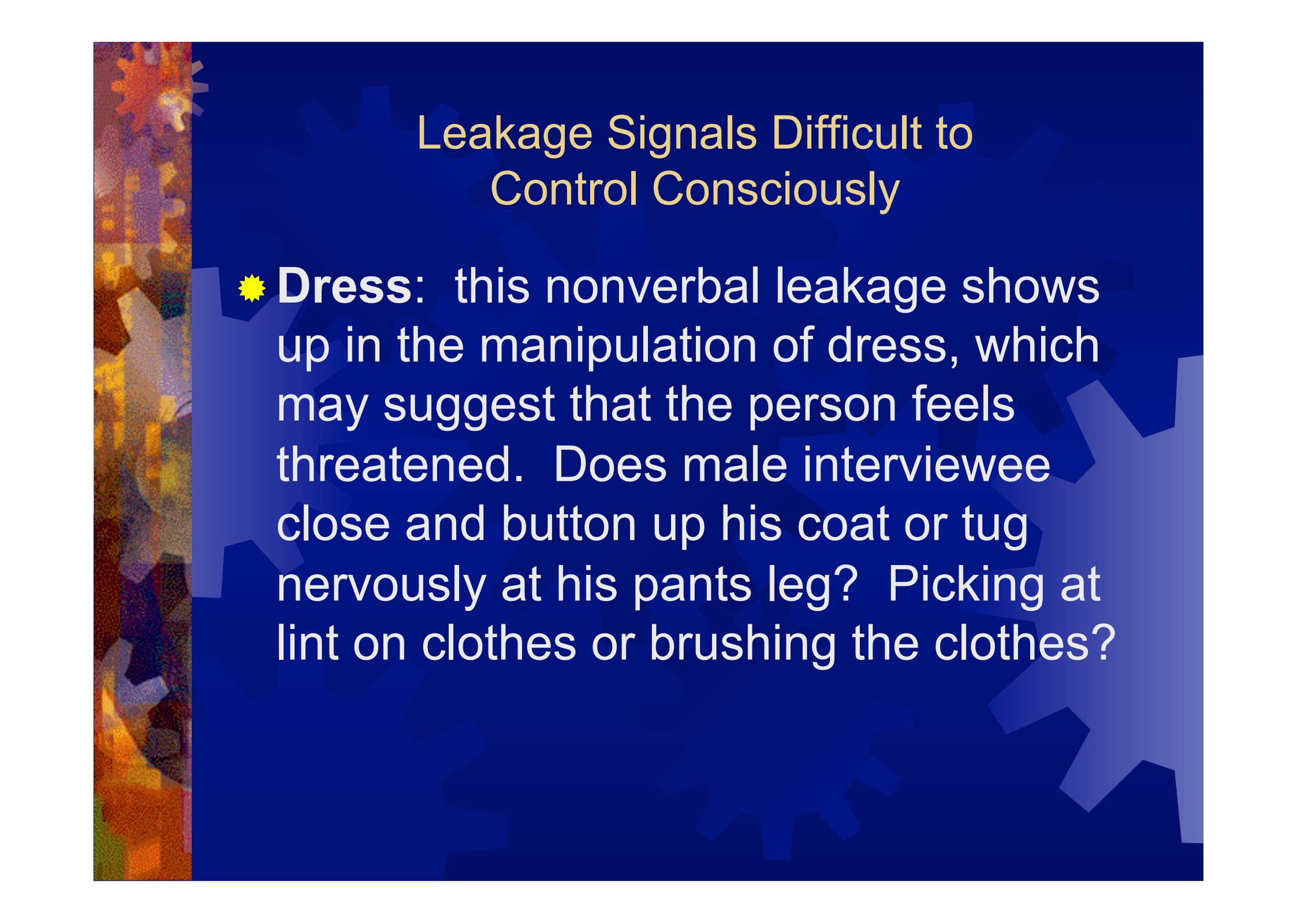
Nonverbal Leakage of Deception

- ✦ When contradictory nonverbal signals betray deception, they are called **leakage**. During deception, certain types of nonverbal signals often escape from the deceiver despite attempts at control. The speaker's subconscious betrays them through this nonverbal leakage.



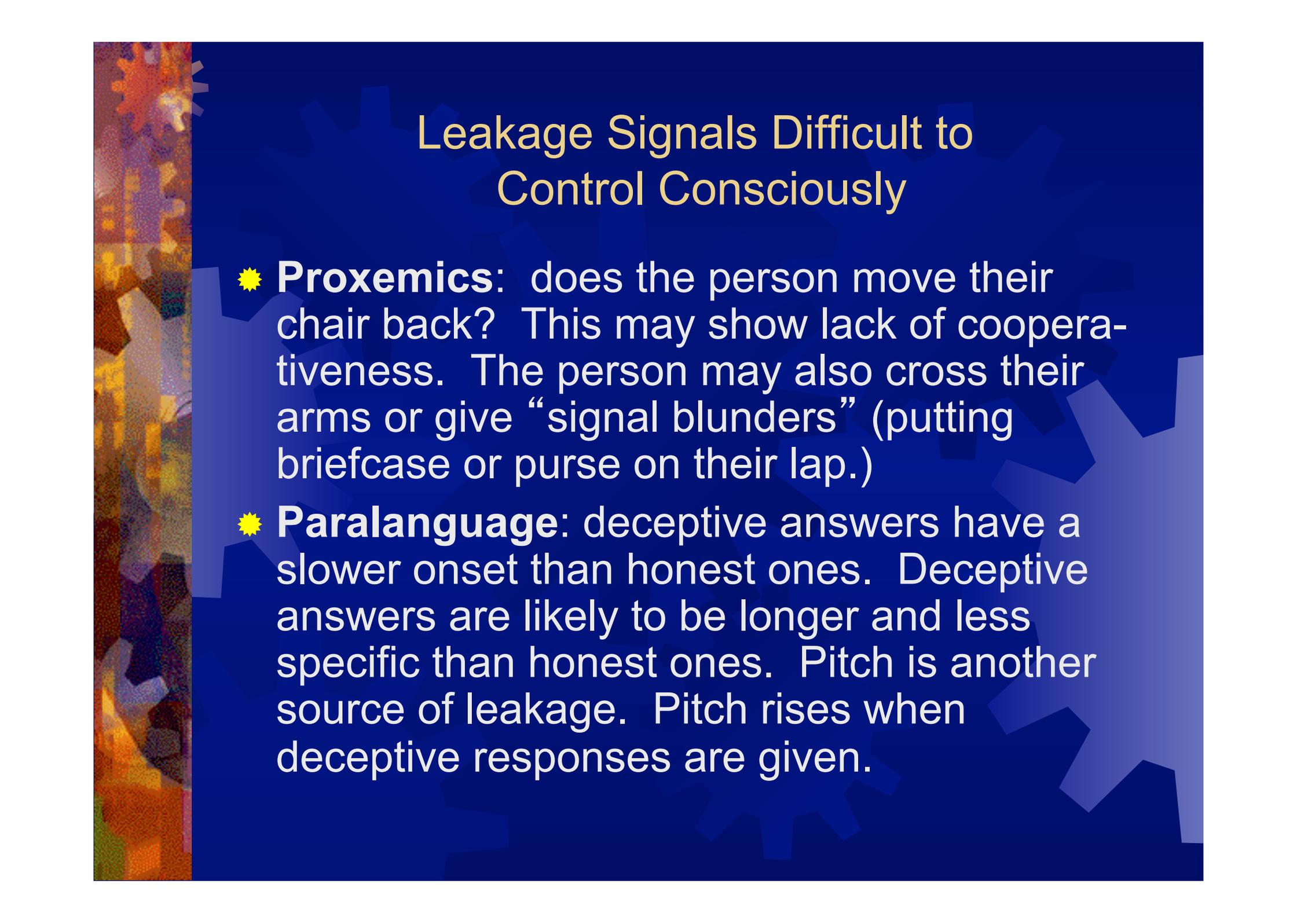
Leakage Signals Difficult to Control Consciously

- ★ **Baseline** : behavioral baseline needs to be established for each person for each situation. What behavior is normal for that person?
- ★ **Kinesics**: manual gestures and trunk movements are the most valuable source of nonverbal leakage of deception. Look at hand-to-face movements. (Hand covering mouth; scratching nose; nail biting; lip biting)
- ★ Are gestures outward and open or inward and limited? What about leg and foot movements?



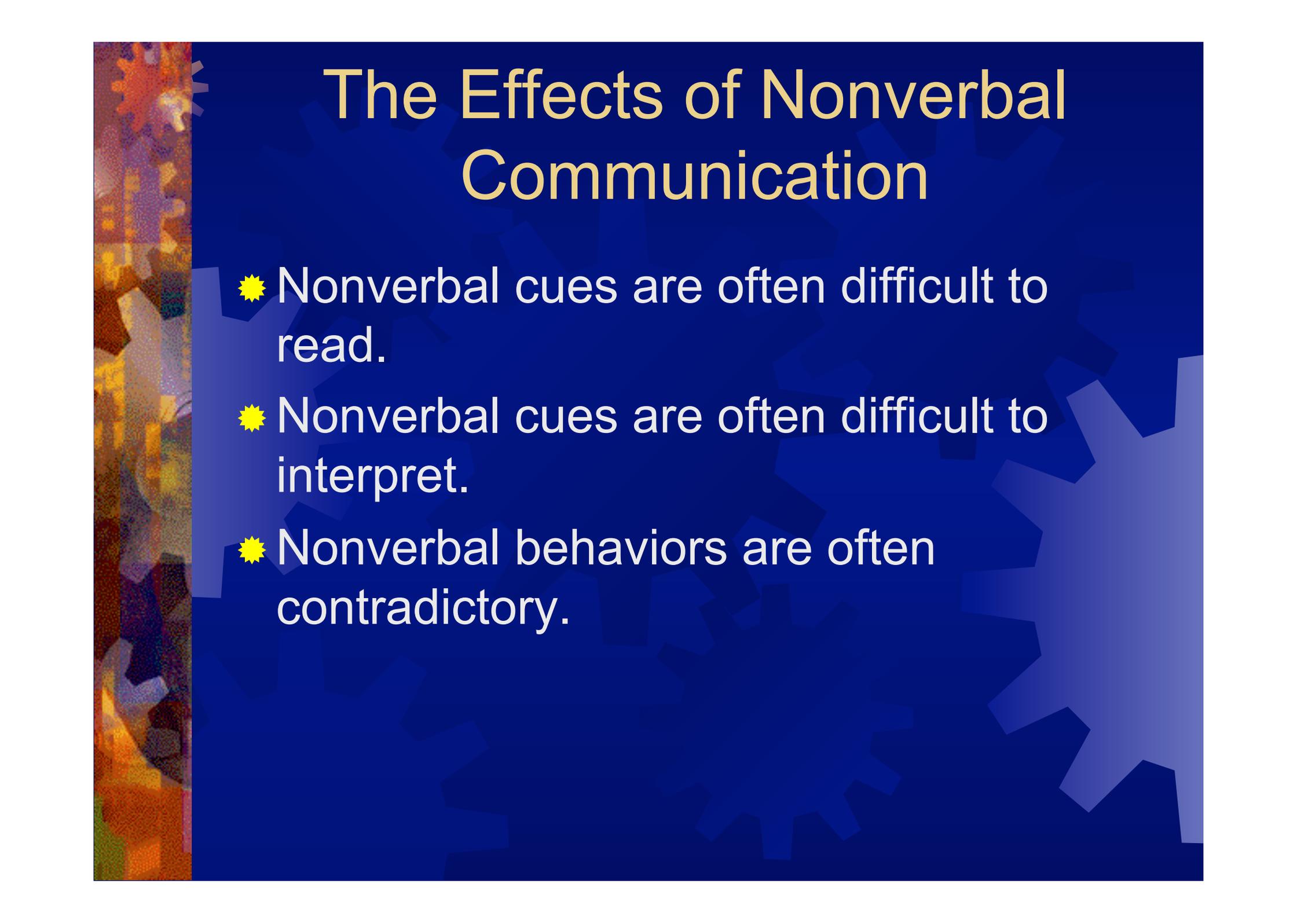
Leakage Signals Difficult to Control Consciously

- ★ **Dress:** this nonverbal leakage shows up in the manipulation of dress, which may suggest that the person feels threatened. Does male interviewee close and button up his coat or tug nervously at his pants leg? Picking at lint on clothes or brushing the clothes?



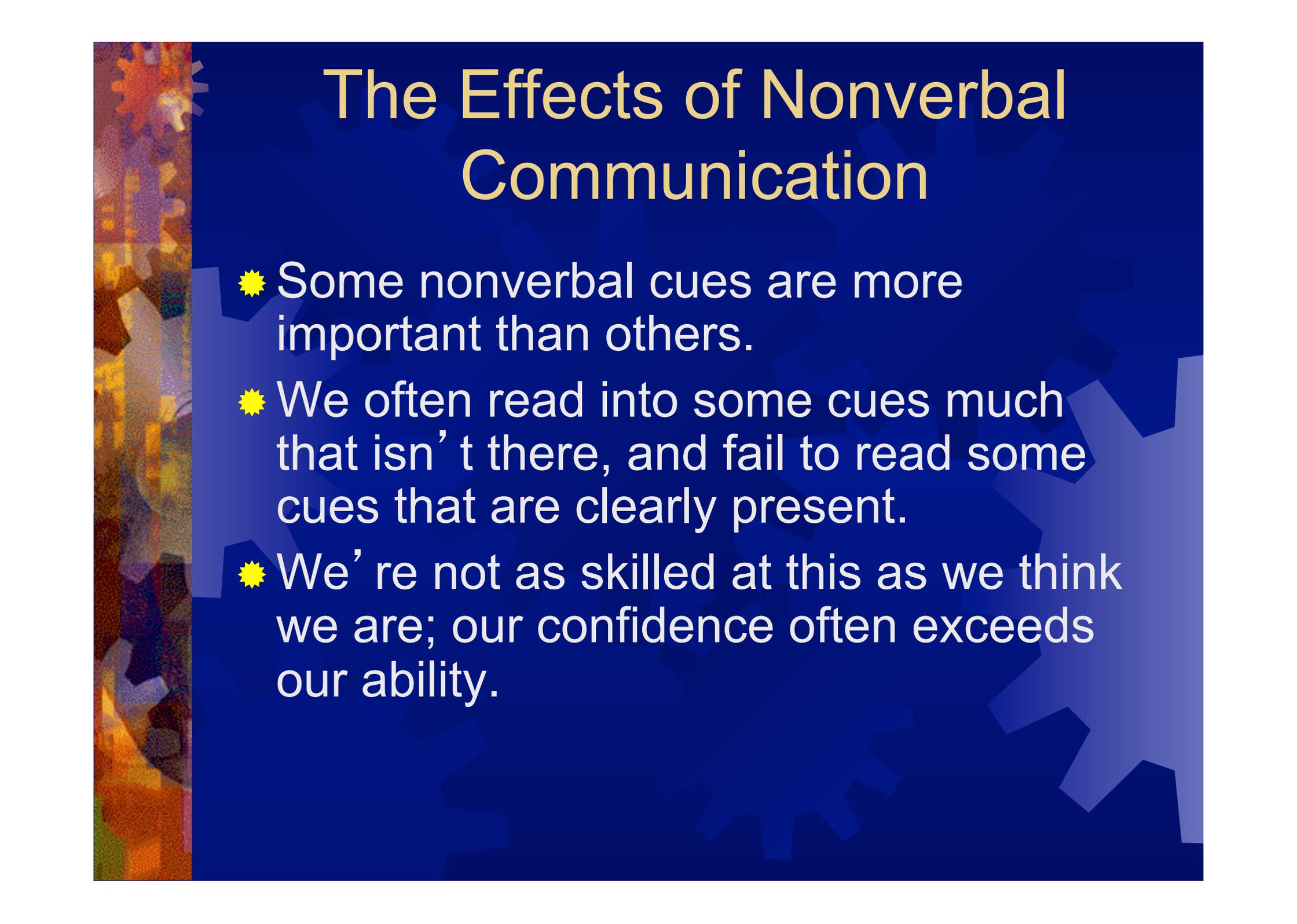
Leakage Signals Difficult to Control Consciously

- ★ **Proxemics:** does the person move their chair back? This may show lack of cooperativeness. The person may also cross their arms or give “signal blunders” (putting briefcase or purse on their lap.)
- ★ **Paralanguage:** deceptive answers have a slower onset than honest ones. Deceptive answers are likely to be longer and less specific than honest ones. Pitch is another source of leakage. Pitch rises when deceptive responses are given.



The Effects of Nonverbal Communication

- ✦ Nonverbal cues are often difficult to read.
- ✦ Nonverbal cues are often difficult to interpret.
- ✦ Nonverbal behaviors are often contradictory.



The Effects of Nonverbal Communication

- ✦ Some nonverbal cues are more important than others.
- ✦ We often read into some cues much that isn't there, and fail to read some cues that are clearly present.
- ✦ We're not as skilled at this as we think we are; our confidence often exceeds our ability.