

## Principles of Professional Communication 1

Non Verbal Communication  
– more than just words

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### What is non verbal communication?

- “Ways in which communication is effected between persons when in each other’s presence other than words” (Kendon,1981)
- “ ... the deliberate or unintentional use of objects, actions, sounds, time or space so as to arouse meanings in others.” (Fleur et al, 1993, 69)
- It is difficult to neatly distinguish between verbal and non verbal messages because people do not just use one mode or another but shift back and forth.

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### Why is non verbal communication important?



What you wear, how you stand, your facial expressions, your tone of voice – all have an effect on the listener

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## How much communication is non verbal?

According to a famous 1981 study by Dr Albert Mehrabian from UCLA, the influence of non verbal messages was as follows:

### Face-to-Face Communication

- 55% body language
- 38% tone of voice
- 7% words used

### Telephone Communication

- 82% tone of voice
- 18% words used



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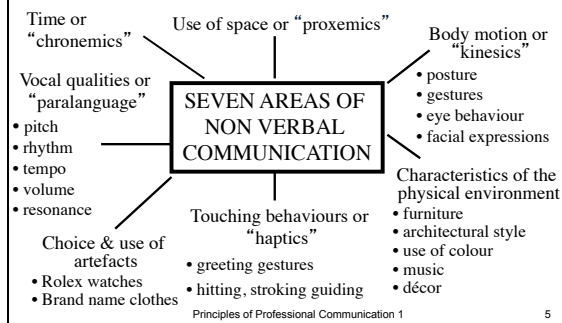
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## Non Verbal Communication can be conveyed through ...



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## Eye behaviour

- The “window to the soul”
- Intensity of gaze signals nature of emotions
- Pupils dilate or enlarge to reflect emotions such as arousal
- Cultural rules about eye gaze
- Eye avoidance perceived as dishonesty

Source: Pease, 1981, 134-136



Figure 104 'Ready' little eyes      Figure 105 Bedroom eyes



Figure 109 Shutting everyone out

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## Facial expressions

- Human face capable of approx 250,000 different expressions that are subtle indicators of emotion
- Women more attuned than men?
- Importance of smiling in social acceptability
- Poker face?
- Research (eg Ekman) argues that there are six basic expressions universally recognised



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## Six 'innate affects'

adapted from Silvan Tomkins *Affect, Imagery, Consciousness*

- Anger →→→ Rage
- Distress →→→ anguish
- Shame →→→ Humiliation
- Enjoyment →→→ Joy
- Interest →→→ Excitement
- Surprise →→→ Startle
- Disgust →→→ Contempt
- Fear →→→ Terror



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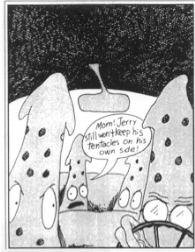
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## Some facts about touching behaviours

- What is acceptable or not acceptable touching behaviour is very much culturally determined
- In general, touching of same sex friends is confined to the shoulders, arms and hands
- How close the relationship is can be seen by the use of either a second hand on the arm shoulder etc in a handshake



The squid family on vacation

Implications of inappropriate touching behaviour according to Gary Larson's "The Far Side"

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## More facts about touching behaviour

- In Western cultures, males are reluctant to touch or be touched by other males
- Compare this to some cultures where greeting gestures include hugging and kissing between men
- The frequency with which people touch is a reliable indicator of their perceived power. The more powerful person is likely to be the toucher and vice versa




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## Handshakes & greeting gestures

Your relationship with the other person will determine how close you stand when shaking hands and whether you use one hand or two.

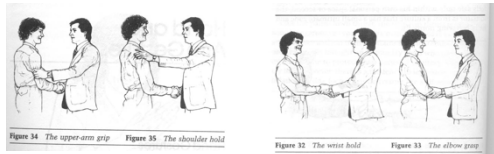


Figure 34 The upper-arm grip Figure 35 The shoulder hold

Figure 32 The wrist hold Figure 33 The elbow grip

Source: Pease, 1981, 53-54

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## Handshakes & greeting gestures

In Western cultures handshakes are an important form of greeting (especially for men) but not all handshakes communicate the same thing

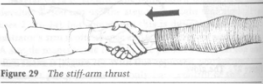


Figure 29 The stiff-arm thrust



Figure 28 The knuckle grinder



Figure 27 The glove



Figure 30 The fingertip grab

Principles of Professional Communication 1 Source: Pease, 1981, 49-51 13

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## The infamous Latham handshake



The handshake that probably lost then-Labor leader Mark Latham the 2004 election

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## What happens if we get it wrong?

- Most cultures have unique greeting rituals
- Nose touching – Alaska
- Cheek kissing – Europe
- Bowing – Japan
- Testicle clutching – PNG

The potential problems of cultural ignorance according to Gary Larson's "The Far Side"



Indoventedly, Roy dooms the entire earth to annihilation when, in an attempt to be friendly, he seizes their leader by the head and shakes vigorously.

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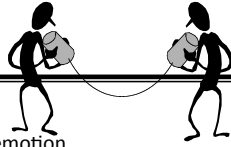
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## Vocal Qualities



- Tone – expresses feeling or emotion
- Inflection – emphasising words and syllables to enhance a message
- Pitch – how high or deep a voice sounds
- Rate – how many words spoken per minute
- Volume – how loud or soft a voice sounds

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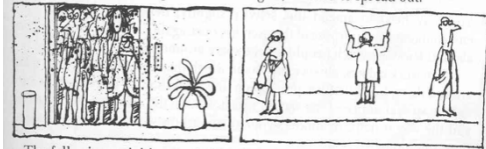
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## Proxemics

- Named by anthropologist Edward T Hall (think “proximity”)
- Refers to the way people use ‘space’ to communicate and to enforce status
- Highly culturally specific



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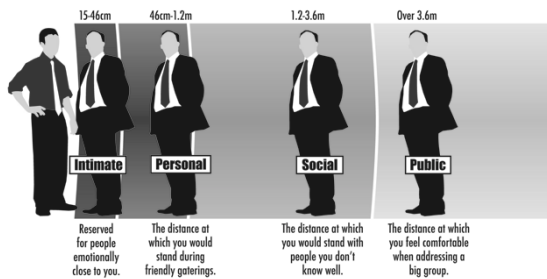
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## Communication Zones



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## Zone distances & personal space



Figure 11. Two men from the city greet each other.



Figure 12. Two men from a country town.

Source: Pease, 1981, 34-35

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## Zone distances & personal space



Figure 10. The negative reaction of a woman on whose territory a man is encroaching. She is leaning backwards, attempting to maintain a comfortable distance. The problem is, however, that the man may be from a country with a smaller personal zone and is moving forward to stand at a distance that is comfortable for him. The woman may interpret this as a sexual move.

Too Close for Comfort?

Q: What indicators are there that the woman may feel uncomfortable?

A: Leaning backwards, raising of coffee mug as a potential barrier

Source: Pease, 1981, 33

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## Proxemics in action in parliament



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## Kinesics or body positioning

- How we use our bodies may subconsciously communicate how we feel
- Body language needs to be interpreted in context and in clusters
- Need to be conscious of how it may be read to avoid sending the wrong message



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## Arm & hand positions

Different hand and arm positions can communicate different messages

Figure 70 Superior attitude shown

Figure 68 Hostile attitude

Figure 71 Holding hands with mouth

Figure 69 Arms spread taken here

How this body language is interpreted also relies on the cluster of other gestures and facial expressions

Principles of Professional Communication 1 Source: Pease, 1981, 92-95 23

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## Labor's Love Lost



Not much love lost here



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## Body language in action ...



Figure 140 Body pointing is used to exclude the man on the right

Source: Pease, 1981, 183

Q: What indicators are there that the man on the right is left out? How does he feel?

A: His crossed arms are a signal of frustration and displeasure. His feet are pointing away from the other two. Their knees and bodies are pointed towards each other signalling attention

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## Body language in action ...



Figure 131 Thinking alike

No, they are not gay!

Source: Pease, 1981, 170

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What are these two men communicating?

Q: The caption says "thinking alike". How do you know?

A: They are "mirroring" each other's body positions indicating that they agree with each other.

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## Relationship between the non verbal & the spoken message



According to researcher Mark Knapp (1978), non verbal cues modify or change the spoken words in any of the following ways:

- Reinforce or complement – using hands to emphasise "how big?"
- Contradict – crossing your fingers to symbolise lying or wish fulfilment
- Regulate or repeat – holding up your hands to stop someone else from talking
- Substitute – head nodding substitutes for "I agree with you."



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## Non verbal communication in the news – find your own examples



Fig 1: Protesters



Fig 2: G man

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## And some more ...



Fig 3: Aboriginal Reconciliation at work

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## Etcetera etcetera ...



Fig 2: I think I left my teeth at the Lodge



Fig 3: Sh\*t happens

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## More pollies in action



Fig 4: (above)  
The Julie Bishop death stare



Fig 5: (left)  
Oops Julia, a bad hair day



Fig 6: Finger or pen pointing is a pseudo aggressive gesture.

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## I hear nothing!!!



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## Egypt 2011



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