

## NEGOTIATION SKILLS AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

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**Abstract:** *This paper discusses the basic psychological and communicational factors, as well as negotiating skills that are necessary for successful business negotiations. The aim is to explain the importance of non-verbal communication, in particular the acquisition of communicational skills which are needed for successful negotiations.*

**Keywords:** *communication, gesture, improvisation, mime expressions, space, listening*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Successful business negotiation depends on many factors and requires knowledge of the multiple disciplines that a negotiator should master so that their negotiation activities lead to positive results. In order to master the art of negotiation, it is necessary to know the basic principles of communication studies - an interdisciplinary science that has its roots in the arts such as rhetoric, grammar, philosophy, psychology, linguistics etc. Today communication studies link with psychoanalysis, neurology, computer science and sociology.

When communicating with other people, consciously or unconsciously, controlled or spontaneously, along with words we use facial expressions, posture, gestures, spatial and temporal situation in which we communicate, modulation of voice, style of dress, etc., all of which fall within the scope of non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is often referred to as body language.

### 2. NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION - THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF

Non-verbal signals show thoughts and emotions, attitudes and traits. They also support verbal communication or they are a substitute for it. Gestures reveal moods and states, enabling us to express agreement or disagreement, acceptance or rejection.

Any gesture can be seen as a specific act that indicates an action, starting someone or something. Most modern research in the field of Communication Studies shows that non-verbal communication is crucial in the first contact. As much as 60% of a complete impression when meeting (first impression) is formed on the basis of non-verbal communication. This moment is settled in the domain of intuitive, unconscious.

Words are often the backbone of human communication, but words can often deceive, mislead or hurt if the evidence is not properly and clearly formed, or is wrongly decoded. If the meaning and content are not transmitted and perceived in a desired way, it means that an error has occurred in the process of communication. Body language, then, is the solution, i.e., the communication bridge. In many cases, non-verbal signals are at an advantage compared to the verbal ones, as they are prejudice free.

Every speaker's aspiration is to harmonize the basic means of expression - voice, gesture, speech, statement and posture. The gesture is sometimes used to supplement, explain or illustrate the text. On the other hand, the movement can be in contradiction with

the text – as a sign that expresses a deliberate, targeted contradiction. The relationship between a gesture and a text can be seen in mutual conjunction of several ways:

- When the text is dominant, content and voice constants show all the speaker's intentions. The gesture is reduced, minimal, expressed through the motions of seeing and mime;
- The gesture complements, highlights the text, that is, the purpose is to supplement and interpret;
- The gesture only follows the emphasized parts of speech, the focus of the argument. The attention of a listener is drawn to the most important place in the speech. The movement acts as a figure of gradation and the voice constant loudness may be accompanied by energetic gestures;
- The movement is emphasized, especially manual gestures. The function of gesture is explanation, not a personal crutch, but a deliberate gesture.
- Sudden, unexpected, spontaneous movement acts as a moment of deceived expectations, as an improvisation in a place of speech in which it is least expected. The movement can be quick, abrupt. The essential argument is usually emphasizes by movements such as standing up, walking, moving from one place to another, etc.;
- Disciplined action is actually part of preparation and strategy for a show. These are the movements of the whole body, that is, the body language.

The choice of means of non-verbal communication depends on the area, of the environment, time available, as well as the number of participants, or listeners. Addressing a wide audience in the larger space requires larger, wider gestures, whereas the dialogue with one participant in a smaller space and political speeches require careful choice movement, gestures and poses, as well as their alignment with speech act.

This essay will explain the three types (levels) of non-verbal communication. These are:

- a) conscious
- b) unconscious
- c) manipulative non-verbal communication.

Conscious non-verbal communication represents a conscious and controlled movement, aimed at the listener, a verbal flow and specific space. This type of communication does not mean practicing movements to perfection although sometimes there is some practice to be used in complex negotiations. The conscious control of one's body movements and, taking a particular position in space and free, spontaneous movement in space means that there is a controlled selection of potential non-verbal signals.

Business people need to know the specific standards, and the personal creativity and imagination will dictate how individuals use them and transform. Standard, for example, covers how to sit (upright, not too reclined, or on the edge of the chair). It is understood that there should be the movements of getting up, greeting, welcoming clients, etc.

Unconscious non-verbal communication is a series of movements, often involuntary. The breathing muscles move—there is breathing in and breathing out, then the muscles in the mouth move, which means the activation of facial musculature. Breathing is itself a movement, as well as the voice. Frown, licking, swallowing saliva, eyebrow lifting,

twisting and twitching of the lips –these are the movements that are involuntary and unconscious. Extremely negative aretics - nasty, petty, repetitive, involuntary movements. Involuntary actions like moving, exaggerated gestures, “wandering” look, peeking back and forth, wildly spinning, etc., interfere with verbal communication and reveal an insecure and frightened person or else, a person unprepared for the interview or performance.

There are details of dress and behaviour that give away a person. Overstressed makeup, for example, gives away a heightened desire to be liked. Promotion and wearing jewellery is often referred to as splurge, while colourful socks with classic men's suits reveal negligence. These are the details that either point to a certain insecurity that is covered by the exterior decoration or negligence. A negligent behaviour, dress and movement point to under-concentration.

Many complex situations can block the nervous system and movement, which then become forced, agitated, tight, excessive, nervous, etc. For this reason there should always be a self-control and conscious management of behaviour and body movements.

Manipulative non-verbal communication is used with the intention of practicing non-verbal communication to perfection in order to present a certain pattern of behaviour that needs to seem natural and relaxed. With this kind of behaviour we give the listener a wrong picture, deliberate misinformation and the desired, intended impression in order to achieve a certain goal. The aim of this calculated conduct is to confuse the caller. These kinds of behaviour can be noticed in polemical discussions, debates in court, in meetings, in meetings of statesmen or leaders of large companies. During the latter meeting the seating arrangements, division of the space and posture are taken into account. The territory is usually “defended” by one team in the negotiations sitting at one side and the other team on the other side of the table. As for the negotiations that are taking place in the office, the negotiators can sit facing each other, side by side, on the diagonal, very far from or opposite each other.

Arranging the position of the parties in the area expresses a “good tone” when guests are welcomed in a friendly, hospitable, warm manner. Spatial distribution is often used with a quite opposite intention, when it comes to important negotiations, for example, buying large companies. Then, the negotiators are deliberately put at a disadvantage by giving them specific seats, or specific places to stand. A variety of forms of behaviour that aren't usually part of the established patterns of business etiquette is used. If respondents or clients use other forms of behaviour in negotiations, some additional psycho-social elements, especially guidance and persuasion are included. In these cases non-verbal communication is necessary.

Non-verbal communication includes all forms of non-speech human behaviour and expression of thoughts and feelings such as: a handshake, a position, i.e., body posture, a shoulder position, facial expression, breathing, expression and eye movements, view focus, leg and arm movements, gestures, tics, touching parts of the body, the distance of the interlocutors, the overall appearance-a salesman's look (dressing, body hygiene, etc.), as well as non-verbal signs in speech behaviour.

A good relationship between verbal and non-verbal communication leads to active participation in communication at the level of the conscious and the unconscious. The elegance and attractiveness of the movement or of dress provokes our unconscious desire to be with that person in contact and to maintain and extend the communication with him/her.

The system of non-verbal communication consists of a sequence of movements such as:

- Directing the view;
- Mime expression –facial expression;
- Listening;
- The hand movements;
- Movement in space;
- The position of the body in space;
- Group arrangement in space.

### **3. VIEW FOCUSING**

Watching as the permanent movement that fully reveals a personality isn't thought of enough. Watching presents an orientation to the other party, and signifies that both parties in the dialogue care about communication. Fixing the gaze, however, is not free, it is frantic behaviour, while a wandering glance presents unfocused viewing.

When you meet, recognize, re-meet a person, etc., eye contact is a signal by which we give a partner the sign that we want to make contact, and that there is recognition. Also, if you avoid making an eye contact - the caller is given the sign that there is a disconnection. Distractions are used in order to avoid an unpleasant partner in communication. Unconscious blinking, winking, a wandering glance, give away a deconcentrated or frightened person.

Pupillary signals, according to psychologists, are indicators of mood changes, i.e., the expansion and contraction of the pupils are signs that can indicate an argument, a conflict, sympathy and so on. We look at each other when:

- 1) we meet for the first time;
- 2) we greet one another;
- 3) we exchange information;
- 4) we listen actively;
- 5) we show interest and attention;
- 6) we observe our partner's reaction.

It is especially important to synchronise watching and listening.

### **4. MIME - FACIAL EXPRESSION**

Statistics show that facial muscles make thousands of movements while we watch, laugh, cry, talk, etc. The facial expression is a hallmark of personality. A person may seem as light, dark, ice, shameful, friendly, etc. Mime is a direct gesture such as movement of the eyes, cheeks, lips, cheek muscles, etc. Some faces reveal everything: emotions and thoughts, mood, state of mind. Others are motionless, like masks.

Expressive gestures, like laughter or a smile, make communication casual, pleasant and natural, only if really honest, cheerful tones and mood prevail. In the case when personal insecurity is covered by constant smiling, or a desire to be liked, a number of these movements can be converted into a spasm, a mask of smiles, and give the overall impression that the person is inclined to "communication flirting". A smile does not have to mean a movement of stretching and spreading lips. A smile includes eyes, as well as the entire face.

Open, friendly, smiling faces are more attractive than sombre, closed and immobile face. However, if the smile is not sincere, it is worthless and counterproductive to make movements that create a mask of smiles.

Movements of the head, above all, express approval or disapproval. Much more common movement is nodding – moving the head up and down while listening to someone. But we sometimes even unconsciously move our head slightly to the right or to the left, or wave the head in terms of disapproval and so we show the speaker that we disagree with him/ her.

American psychological research has led to the conclusion that the likes at the first meeting are due to a friendly expression (55%), to a friendly tone of voice (38%) and to the content of the message (7%).

## **5. LISTENING AS A PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION**

Listening facilitates receiving and understanding of the message, and thus determining its meaning. Listening can be internal and external. In internal listening we listen to our own voice and words (i.e., thoughts), and external listening involves the world around us.

To listen actively means to take the role of the customer, which is not easy. It requires concentration and some effort. In active listening the “shop assistant” listens to what the “customer” says, looking at what the customer does, assesses the content of the information received, and separates the important from the unimportant.

- a) The act of listening provides that:
- b) The participant in communication fully understands;
- c) the information is properly received and decoded;
- d) the manner in which respondent sends the message is revealed ;
- e) the key issue is developed and set;
- f) the participant or speaker is supported.

Speech without listening is a one-way street. To hear someone does not mean to listen to them. The very listening does not mean that the words have reached the listener. Sometimes the rhythm of listening is faster than the rhythm of speech, and "the listener" is left some time for his/ her own thoughts. Sometimes" the listener" estimates that there is no benefit from listening, and is rather amused by his/ her own thoughts.

Basically, active listening is a need to understand and march towards a common goal. When you listen carefully, you show understanding for people, care and compassion. When the partners listen actively in any kind of communication, they gain mutual trust, it is easier to communicate and solve a problem. Non-verbal signals, facial expressions, body position, motions of approval, show our partner in communication that we listen carefully. Listening can be compromised by the manifest aggression coming from any side. Aggression is always a consequence of placing one, two or more parties, in the first place in communication, emphasizing the individual who considers him/ herself the centre of attention and who tries to impose their own topics and ideas.

## **6. THE ARM MOVEMENTS**

Arm movements, hand or finger movements that are expressed unconsciously or consciously do the talking, informing and explaining. Arms and hands are used for “painting”, “drawing “what is explained, almost pantomimic gesture underlines a

statement. Manual gesture is significant, but exaggerated gestures interrupt the flow of communication. Movement can divert attention from the words-a topic and verbal part of the process, the information flow, so that the focus is finally lost in the constant motion. Some people have exaggerated gestures during a speech, which gives the communication a too theatrical feature. On the other hand, some people are quite relaxed, their arms crossed on their chest, and the third party, however, are those who are still and immobile during the act of speaking or listening.

Banging with a hand on the table, crossed arms, turning thumbs are so-called "signs of barriers". These distracting gesture raise an invisible wall between the participants, and they can mean a kind of tension. The movements of finger-pointing, slamming with a hand, getting too close, face to face with a person, act as aggressive behaviour that cannot attract and convince the partner in communication, as it could by force of will and positive energy.

Gesturing movement should be consistent with the verbal act, it should emphasize a word or be a replacement for it. Abrupt movement of the arm (hand) can interrupted a monologue, a dialogue, etc. Psychologists emphasise manual gestures in particular and explain the importance of different movements: arm, hand, fingers in both hands, part of arm from the elbow, shoulder, etc. Thus, they state the following:

- a) the palms facing up indicate that the partner in communication is ready and open for discussion –and getting closer;
- b) the palms facing down mean closing, the refusal of dialogue –and getting further;
- c) tapping with one or both hands means emphasizing and highlighting certain words or phrases;
- d) hand palms facing each other are a signal of reflection - hesitation;
- e) half-folded hand, palm facing the chest of the speaker means of referring to themselves;
- f) the palm open towards the other party with half-stretched arm at the elbow means stopping participant.

The finger language is also very interesting and may show certain conditions (for example, restless fingers express uncertainty, nervousness; intertwined fingers - contemplation; widespread - confidence, self-esteem). Clenched fist means anger, and fear. Arms and hands should be peacefully resting on a table or in your lap, against an armchair or chair. This emphasizes the relaxed and comfortable position of a person who is sure of him/ herself and takes a natural stance and posture.

It is very important that the hand movements are not inconsistent with the spoken text.

## **7. MOVEMENTS IN SPACE**

Movement in space should be thoughtful, organized and controlled. Depending on the size of the area and the reason for gathering, the range of motions change, as well as posture and movement in space. Movement in the space of the office is kept to a minimum, unlike the sequence of movements when, for example, giving presentations or lectures in large halls, auditoriums and so on.

Eye contact should be taken in account, regardless of the number of listeners. It is important to take into account the distance in the space that we occupy in relations with others, since the distance reflects the type of connection and relationships. This rule does not apply equally for every situation. There are some differences in encounters with Asians, Americans or Europeans. When meeting strangers, introducing or meeting in the

open space, the distance between people should be about 120 cm. This distance is what the Europeans considered decent distance, and points out that the people do not know each other well, or that they have just met. When people meet in a smaller space, the distance is 80 cm. At this distance, closer ties establish. The third type is a distance of 50 cm and indicates that partners know each other well and that they are in good business contacts.

## **8. BODY POSITION IN SPACE**

Active movement consists of a series of movements that lead to poses and change of position, location and direction of movement. Motion control involves perceptual moment, i.e. spotting the distance at which people or objects are, and also the speed of performing certain movements. Motion control means repetition, i.e. repetition of certain movements. Movement control can be tracked by the phases of motion:

- a) initiating movement;
- b) the duration of the movement - the determination of the speed of movement;
- c) emphasizing of the movement or maintaining it;
- d) the completion of the movement;
- e) transfer to another movement or rest.

Movements give away nervousness and do well in many situations. The accuracy with which the movements, postures and changing positions are performed, reveals not only the harmony and security, but it also assures the partner of the credibility of the person with whom he/she gets involved in different types of relationships. Disorientation in space, i.e., a wrong place, position or a way of sitting, puts the individual in a subordinate position from which he/she cannot respond, nor participate actively in the communication process.

There are predictable movements - forms, e.g. of greeting, meeting some old friends and acquaintances (hugging, kissing, etc.). It is offensive if you refuse these predictable movements, but, nevertheless, you should avoid too intrusive and heartfelt gestures in a discreet way, and even reject such movements, as well as the inarticulate gestures. In this sense we should concentrate on following the movements of people who we communicate with.

## **9. GROUP ARRANGEMENT IN SPACE**

Group arrangement can be spontaneous, which is not very common in business communication. In business communication group arrangement in space is specified by certain rules. Spontaneous gathering and grouping can be observed when traveling, seminars, tours, etc. And in these situations grouping is predictable in a way and it can, if organized by a skillful organizer, look spontaneous.

In other cases, the movement and arrangement in space are determined by profession, tasks and goals. In organizing the conference presentations and negotiations, the biggest concern of the organizer is how to design the space, how to fill it and ennoble it. Otherwise there is chaos, disorientation and dissatisfaction of participants and guests. Etiquette in the allocation of space should be observed, not only during the negotiations, but also at the luncheon.

When arranging groups in space, you should take into account the status of the participants, hierarchical relationships, and you should use any information about the eventual interpersonal relationships of the participants in the event.

## 10. CONCLUSION

Any experienced negotiator must know his/her goals and abilities in order to be able to determine their expectations. Negotiation is not to impose your will, neither is the aim of communication to serve your goals exclusively. Negotiation tactics must not be negative neither should it be reduced to persuasion.

The goal of negotiations should be a mutual agreement. Only cooperation and compromise will lead to a conclusion acceptable to all participants in the negotiation. Negotiation is the art of adaptation and as such is in fact the art of communication. The above facts clearly demonstrate the importance of developing communication skills for successful negotiations.

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