

Student name: _____ Date: _____

Describe non-verbal skills.

Objectives:

- A. Define non-verbal skills.
- B. Identify forms of non-verbal skills by reading examples and referring to the list of forms pertaining to non-verbal communication on the student information sheet.
- C. Reflect on your personal use of non-verbal skills.

MODULE 7C: INFORMATION SHEET

TO THE STUDENT: Read and study this information sheet and complete the student activities at the end.

What are non-verbal skills?

Non-verbal skills involve looking at all the processes we use in communicating our language or understanding another's language or culture except speech and using words. It is important to note that the term non-verbal is actually a misnomer. When the use of the voice and what is done with and to words are emphasized, this can be interpreted as non-verbal communication.

The way we stand, sit, move, gesture and use facial expressions, can tell others about how we feel. In some instances this form of communication can be more powerful than the spoken or written language. To be a successful communicator we must be able to master how we relay and receive information non-verbally.

Types of non- verbal skills

Appearance - How we look has an immediate subconscious effect on everyone we meet. Impressions are made about people in a matter of seconds. Evaluating factors are attractiveness, height, weight, body shape, hairstyle and dress.

Occulesics - People who drop their eyes or who do not look right at you are thought to be hiding something, or being evasive. The perception is one of insincerity. People who give direct eye contact when you are talking to them are often perceived as strong and honest.

For example:

- Normal eye contact means communication is open.
- Eye contact and head nodding means understanding, not necessarily approval.
- Avoiding eye contact could suggest feelings of insecurity.
- Staring could mean dislike.
- Eye movement from side to side could indicate if someone is not being truthful.

Kinesics - The lay term is body language and refers to movements other than touching. Specifically, this term refers to posture, movement styles and gestures. Body language can convey several things about a person. It can convey mood, interest, attentiveness and approval. Hand, foot and body movement can achieve this. This can be witnessed by the following examples:

- Slouching
- Standing straight
- Leaning back on a chair
- Fast hand movements
- Arms folded
- Foot tapping

Vocalics - This refers to non-verbal cues in a speaker's voice. The way an utterance is made can determine its meaning more so than the text itself. Words can be said in different tones such as sarcastic or hesitant to name a few.

Haptics - Refers to the study of touching behavior. Basically, gentle touching of someone encourages trust, compliance and affection. Aggressive touch usually has a negative connotation. Be careful about how, where and when you touch someone. You want to make sure a reassuring pat on the shoulder is not misinterpreted as something else. Some people have sensory issues and simply do not like to be touched.

Olfactics - Refers to the study of scents and odors. A person's scent and odors reflect what others think of our hygiene, personality and culture.

Proxemics - Refers to the study of the use of personal space. People demonstrate a need for personal space (e.g. walls and fences). A violation of this space can cause distress and anxiety. Allow at least three feet of space between you and the person you are communicating with. If you invade someone's personal space it makes that person uncomfortable.

Territoriality - This is a stationary personal space. Two examples would be a reserved table at a restaurant or a specific desk at work.

Chronemics - Refers to the study of use and perception of time. Two opposite examples would be being punctual for a meeting or fashionably late for an appointment.

MODULE 7C: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

TO THE STUDENT: After reading and studying the above information sheet, complete the following activities.

Activity 1 - Define the term “non-verbal skills.”**Activity 2 - Identify the forms of non-verbal skills.**

In the space provided next to each example below write the correct form of non-verbal skills from the listing on the information sheet.

1. _____ “I knew I was in trouble when she said, “Oh hello!” in a very low voice.”
2. _____ When conducting a job interview, I prefer the applicant to sit at least four feet from me at all times.”
3. _____ “Some people speculate that she only hires attractive assistants.”
4. _____ “She believes if she shows late for the appointment that others will think she is important.”
5. _____ “Joe twitches when he is around his boss.”
6. _____ “He parks in that spot because he is the club champ.”
7. _____ “To show she was interested in Bill, she touched his arm three times during their conversation.”
8. _____ “My students often look to the floor when they are telling me a lie.”
9. _____ “She always looks like a million bucks.”

Activity 3 - Reflect on your personal use of non-verbal skills.

List the types of non-verbal skills you have used while at work. Refer to the types listed in the information section of this module.

Activity 4 - Evaluate what type of impact these forms of non-verbal skills have had on your interaction with others at work. From your personal list of non-verbal skills you generated in activity 3, please rate each of them in the space provided below using the following codes:

Positive Impact- PI,
Little Impact - LI, and
Negative Impact - NI.

(You may choose more than one code for these forms if the form had different effects at different times e.g. Territoriality LI, NI.)

Activity 5 - Application of non-verbal skills.

Explain in a complete paragraph some ways you can improve your communication with others at work through the use of non-verbal skills. Use a separate sheet of paper.

MODULE 7C: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE

Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards for Career Education and Work

13.3.11. Career Retention and Advancement

- A. Evaluate personal attitudes and work habits that support career retention and advancement.

Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening (RWSL)

1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently

- E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.