

Forms of Communicating Verbal Communication

All forms of communication can be categorized as either verbal or nonverbal. Both verbal and nonverbal communication can be subdivided into either vocal or non- vocal. Verbal communication involves using speech to exchange information with others. We usually communicate verbally in face-to-face conversations such as; meetings, interviews, conferences, speeches, phone calls e.t.c. Much of the communication that takes place between people is both verbal and non-verbal; that is, it is based on language and gestures.

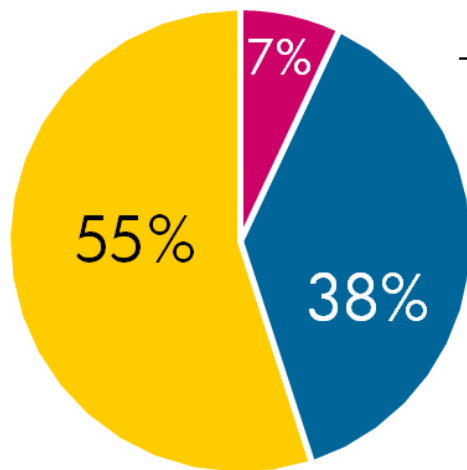
Verbal communication of the vocal category includes spoken language, while non- vocal verbal communication involves written communication as well as communication that is transmitted through sign language, finger spelling, Braille, or other similar alternatives to verbal language.

Non-Verbal

Non-verbal communication is a type of communication that employs gestures and body language. The term "body language" is sometimes used to denote non-verbal communications. "Body Language" is the communication of personal feelings, emotions, attitudes, and thoughts through body-movements such as gestures, postures, facial expressions, touch, smell, walking styles and positions among others. These movements can be done either consciously or involuntarily; more often they 'happen' subconsciously, and are accompanied, or not accompanied, by words.

There are basically three elements in any face-to-face communication. These three elements account differently for the meaning of the message:

- *Words account for 7%*
- *Tone of voice accounts for 38% and*
- *Body language accounts for 55% of the message.*



Dr. Albert Mehrabian's 7-38-55% Rule

Elements of Personal Communication

- 7% spoken words
- 38% voice, tone
- 55% body language

Our body language and tone of voice should be consistent with the words we use. This is only possible when we say what we mean to say and say it rightly. Otherwise we can confuse people and reduce the prospect of getting our message across to be understood. Non-verbal communication can lead to misunderstandings, communication failure and even conflicts if the interlocutors are careless.

Non-verbal communication includes:

**(P)OSTURES & GESTURES (E)YE CONTACT (O)RIENTATION (P)RESENTATION
(L)OOKS(E)PRESSIONS OF EMOTION**

Body language and kinesics are based on the behavioral patterns of non-verbal communication. Body language can actually contradict verbal communications and reveal our inner feelings about any particular person or topic either intentionally or unintentionally.

The way in which you fold your arms, cross your legs, sit, stand, walk, move your head, eyes, lips reveal what you may be thinking or feeling. For example, you may be sitting and conversing with a person; suddenly, he leans forward and with both arms clutches the chair. By doing so he non-verbally communicates to you his desire to end the meeting. Body language has shed new light on the dynamics of relationships.

Hands Gestures

Hands and arms are used by most of us to communicate our thoughts. People rub arms together, keep their arms closed, and clench the fists. All these tell what the person has in his mind involuntarily. It is a way that people non-verbally communicate positive expectations. Hands clenched together seems to be a confident gesture as some people who use it are often smiling and sound happy. However, if the hands are clenched too tightly, it is indicative of frustration or hostile attitude.

Eye Gestures/facial expression

Facial expression, offers the most readily observable group of gestures. We focus our eyes on the face more often than on any other part of the body, and the expressions we see there have widely accepted meanings.

If a prospect's eyes are downcast and face turned away, you're being shut out, however, if the mouth move, he is probably considering your presentation. If his eyes engage yours for several seconds at a time with a slight, one-sided smile extending at least to nose level, he is weighing your proposal. It is only when you see 'eye to eye' with another person that a real basis for communication can be established. Other forms of nonverbal communication include: Touch, smell, distance.

The number of people in a communication situation affects the use of non-verbal communication. The more the persons involved, the more complex the use and understanding of the non-verbal communication becomes. However, to decipher the non-verbal communication it is important to see, interpret and understand them holistically and in a context, while identifying the different types of personalities involved.