

Nonverbal Communication: In-Class Activity

Purpose:

To give you first-hand experience in how communication may occur nonverbally.

Procedure:

In-Class Activity

1. Choose a partner or one will be assigned to you.
2. Choose a subject that you both feel you can talk about. You will be talking to each other for a while, so either choose a good topic or have back-up topics. (Movie preferences? Restaurant options? Major?)
3. While talking to each other, take the following positions (about 2-3 minutes each):
 - a. Standing far apart
 - b. Standing **very** close together, face to face (almost touching)
 - c. Both of you sitting down
 - d. One person standing up, the other person sitting down (change places so that each person fulfills both roles)
 - e. One person talking while the other person nonverbally communicates that he/she is not listening (change places so that each person fulfills both roles)
 - f. One person talking while the other person nonverbally communicates that he/she is actively listening (change places so that each person fulfills both roles)

Processing/Discussion Questions

We may do this in class, or you may have to write (type) up your answers to the following questions. If the latter, you need to thoughtfully answer all parts of each question, using examples, at least one paragraph in length.

*(If we are turning this in, please remember to put the **Name** of the Assignment at the **top** of your paper, as well as your **name** and the **class meeting days/time** in the **upper right corner** of your paper.)*

1. Was there any position that you felt very uncomfortable communicating in? Why (or why not)?
2. Specifically, how did you feel when you were sitting down while talking to your partner, who was standing up? Do you think other people would have felt the same way? Why or why not?
3. When you tried to communicate that you were not listening to your partner, what nonverbal cues did you use? Do you think they effectively communicated your (feigned) disinterest? What did your partner do during this time that caused you to believe your nonverbal communication of disinterest was effective (or ineffective)?
4. When you tried to communicate that you were actively listening to your partner, what nonverbal cues did you use? Do you think they effectively communicated your (genuine) interest? What did your partner do during this time that caused you to believe your nonverbal communication of interest was effective (or ineffective)?

5. What did you learn from this experience? Did you find it helpful to you in your personal or professional life? Why or why not?