# *Nonverbal Messages Tell More A Practical Guide to Nonverbal Communication 1st edition Gamble Solutions Manual*

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## Chapter 2: Nonverbal Skillfulness

### Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, students should be able to:

- Explain the core components of nonverbal skillfulness
- Explain how we learn nonverbal skillfulness
- Describe how nonverbal communication is spontaneous, deliberate and multi-channel
- Describe three distinct nonverbal codes (intrinsic, iconic and arbitrary)
- Explain five cultural dimensions that affect nonverbal communication

### Lecture Plan

*The goals of this lecture are 1) to introduce students to the concept and components of nonverbal skillfulness; and 2) to enable students to recognize distinct cultural effects on nonverbal communication.*

Chapter Opening Poem.
As you start the lesson you may want to read the poem and ask students what they think it means. After completing the lesson, return to the poem and use it to have students summarize what they have learned.

I. Components of Nonverbal Skillfulness (slide 2)
   A. Review each component one by one: social intelligence, emotional intelligence, nonverbal sensitivity and nonverbal expressivity. After each one, ask students to rate themselves on each component, using a standard Likert scale (1= poor, 10=excellent). At the end, ask students to discuss their ratings with a neighbor, along with concrete reasons for each rating. Ask for volunteer report outs.
   B. ***Active Option*—Class Activity #1 (Who is most skillful?).** Ask students to apply the components to familiar characters from a television show or movie.
   C. Ask students if they think these components can be learned, why they answered the way that they did, and whether they think Nonverbal Skillfulness is important to learn.

II. Learning by Doing: How We Figure Things Out (slide 3)
   A. Review how we learn nonverbal skillfulness—by observing, imitating and modeling others.
      1. ***Active Option*—Class Activity #2 (Soup Nazi).**
   B. Review the concepts of spontaneous, deliberate, and multi-channel messages.
      1. ***Active Option*—Class Activity #3 (Lying to Myself).**

III. Nonverbal Code-Sharing (slide 4)
   A. Review Ekman and Friesen's three nonverbal codes: intrinsic, iconic and arbitrary. Either provide your own examples or ask students to provide examples from their experience.
   B. Show a picture depicting someone displaying cues from each code, and ask students to identify the cues in the picture (e.g. a photo of someone who made a visible mistake and another person responding with a dismissive gesture).
   C. ***Active Option*—Class Activity #4 (My Secret Code).** Ask students to identify examples of nonverbal cues that they use regularly, from each code. Have them share their



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examples in small groups and report out similarities, differences, or just the funniest or most interesting examples.

IV. Culture's Effects on Coding (slide 5)
   A. Ask students if they know anyone who tends to operate with an "ethnocentric lens", and to share with a neighbor. Ask for volunteers to report out, if comfortable.
   B. Review which cues are considered universal.
      1. Ask students to discuss in pairs whether they think nonverbal cues are more universal or more diverse across cultures. Process results with a show of hands or a value line.

V. Culture's Effects on Nonverbal Variation—Five Cultural Dimensions (slides 6-11)
   A. Review each cultural dimension that affects nonverbal communication, identifying the countries that fit each end of each dimension (see chapter outline).
   B. Discuss the complexity of tracking cultural differences in a highly diverse society (like certain areas of the United States), where people have multifaceted cultural and ethnic identities (e.g. Caucasian-American mother and Mexican father).
      1. Explain that cultural identity is complex and influenced by how strongly a person adopts the values, beliefs, and behaviors of a culture as part of their self-concept.
         a. Ask students to identify cultural and ethnic components of their own identity.
      2. Explain that even though "the U.S." may fall at one end of these dimensions, those with complex cultural or ethnic identities may not fit neatly into that location.
   C. ***Active Option*—Class Activity #5 (Draw Me Culturally)**. This activity asks students to apply these broad cultural dimensions to themselves and to grapple with the complexity that results.

VI. Characteristics of Nonverbal Skillfulness (slide 12)
   A. Review the characteristics that contribute to Nonverbal Skillfulness: expressivity, sensitivity, self-awareness, self-regulation and motivation.
   B. Review what we know about what types of people tend to be better at encoding and decoding nonverbal cues.
   C. Reinforce the learning object of developing greater Nonverbal Skillfulness and the benefit of a class that teaches this skill.

## Discussion Questions

*These questions can be processed during class using your favorite interactive learning structure. If pressed for time, consider assigning one or more questions as homework and processing them during the next class period.*

1. Do you believe you are a relatively skilled or unskilled nonverbal communicator (encoding, decoding, or both)? Why?
2. Can you think of an experience when you used observation and imitation to pick up on an expected nonverbal behavior? (You might need to nudge them with an example, like a mom shaking her head at a five-year-old who picks his nose in public.)
3. Do you tend to be more spontaneous or more deliberate in sending nonverbal cues? Provide an example to support your answer.
4. Where do you fall on the five dimensions of culture that affect nonverbal communication? Do you fall cleanly onto one end or the other of each dimension, or is your cultural or ethnic identity more complex or complicated? How so, specifically?



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## In-class Activities

1. ***Who is most skillful?*** As you review the meaning of each component of Nonverbal Skillfulness, ask students to identify which character from a popular, well-known television show or movie is best at each component. It will help to have pictures of each major character posted on the PPT slide during this activity. At the end of the activity, have the class vote on "BEST IN SHOW" and argue their case.
2. ***Soup Nazi (Seinfeld).*** To illustrate how we pick up nonverbal "rules", watch the Seinfeld episode called "The Soup Nazi", available on YouTube (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7WRxEY8o3kc ). Begin the clip when George and Seinfeld are standing in line, and end after George is banished from the store. Before showing the clip, ask students to write down as many "rules" for nonverbal behavior that they can find in the clip. (You may have to prompt them by reiterating that these rules can be about movement, facial expressions, use of space, etc.). Discuss as a class.
3. ***Lying to Myself (30 Rock).*** Watch the following short clip from the television program "30 Rock", featuring Kenneth, the page: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nu0rHfUzT2Y Ask students to identify nonverbal messages (mostly facial expressions and body movements) they believe are spontaneous, deliberate, and multi-channel (within the fictional world of the show, of course).
4. ***My Secret Code.*** Ask students to identify examples of nonverbal cues from each code that they use regularly. Have them share their examples in small groups, and report out similarities, differences, or just the funniest or most interesting examples.
5. ***Draw Me Culturally***. Make handouts depicting a child-like outline of a person (a "gingerbread" figure's outline works well). Distribute the handouts to students. Instruct students to choose which end of each dimension fits them the "best" (most consistently), and ask them to attempt to illustrate that cultural feature on their "Me" outline. (For example, students who are "noncontact" might draw other little figures far away from the central figure.) When finished, divide students into groups of 4 or 5 and ask them to share/describe their overall cultural identity with each other. Before reconvening as a whole class, ask them to share whether their nonverbal cultural features have ever led to misunderstandings or conflicts with others.



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# Nonverbal Skillfulness

## Chapter 2

Nonverbal Messages Tell More

*What you think I'm saying*
*May be other than what I mean.*
*What you think I'm feeling*
*May be exactly that which I am not.*
*Read between my lines.*
*Look between my actions.*

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# Components of Nonverbal Skillfulness

- Social intelligence
  - The ability to get along with others, understand their emotions, motivations and intentions, and get them to cooperate with you
- Emotional intelligence
  - The ability to monitor your own and others' emotions and to use this knowledge to guide your thinking and actions
- Nonverbal sensitivity
  - The capacity to decode others' expressions accurately
- Nonverbal expressivity
  - The ability to encode and express yourself in ways that others can decode correctly

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# Learning by Doing

- We learn nonverbal skillfulness by
  - Observing
  - Imitating
  - Mirroring
- We send and decode nonverbal messages that are
  - Spontaneous
  - Deliberate
  - Multi-Channel

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# Nonverbal Code-Sharing

- The intrinsic code
  - Natural elements of our appearance that convey aspects of our identity, including gender and status
- The iconic code
  - Learned, posed or deliberately sent nonverbal cues intended to foster a desired perception of our identity
- The arbitrary code
  - A socially constructed and learned system of symbolic nonverbal cues

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# Culture's Effects on Coding

- Universal nonverbal elements can include facial expressions and gestures
- Cultures can vary in their use of these elements
- Nonverbal skillfulness avoids "ethnocentrism", the assumption that our own culture's nonverbal norms define what is appropriate

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# Culture's Effects on Nonverbal Variation

- Five cultural dimensions affect nonverbal communication
  - Individualist/Collectivist
  - Immediate/Nonimmediate
  - Low-Power-Distance/High-Power-Distance
  - High-Context/Low-Context
  - Masculine/Feminine

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# Cultural Dimensions, continued

- Individualist Cultures
  - Value personal space and privacy
  - Approve of free, spontaneous expression in public or private
- Collectivist Cultures
  - Value harmony, togetherness and tradition
  - Frown upon expressing negative thoughts and feelings

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# Cultural Dimensions, continued

- Immediate (Contact) Cultures
  - Touch more, face each other more directly, make more eye contact, stand more closely, talk more loudly
  - Gaze tends to focus on the face during interactions
- Nonimmediate (Noncontact) Cultures
  - Touch less, face each other less directly, make less eye contact, stand farther apart, talk more softly
  - Gaze tends to focus on the full body during interactions

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# Cultural Dimensions, continued

- Low-Power-Distance Cultures
  - Expect egalitarian distributions of power
  - Nonverbal displays are more similar, diminishing status differences
- High-Power-Distance Cultures
  - Expect distinct differences in power, with higher-status members holding more power and resources
  - Nonverbal displays stress these status differences

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# Cultural Dimensions, continued

- High-Context Cultures
  - More importance is given to nonverbal than to verbal expression
  - Collectivist cultures tend to be high-context
- Low-Context Cultures
  - More importance is given to verbal than to nonverbal expression
  - Individualist cultures tend to be low-context

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# Cultural Dimensions, continued

- Feminine Cultures
  - Less rigid gender role assignments are upheld
  - Stereotypically female qualities are valued (cooperation, caregiving and compassion)
  - More freedom of nonverbal expression
- Masculine Cultures
  - More rigid gender role assignments are upheld
  - Stereotypically masculine qualities are valued (ambition, dominance and competitiveness)
  - Less freedom of nonverbal expression

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# Characteristics of Nonverbal Skillfulness

- Expressivity
- Sensitivity
- Self-awareness
- Self-regulation
- Motivation

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