

# **Academic and Scientific Communication Skills**

**Lesson One**

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# Why is communication important?

**Important for**

- *expressing* information, behaviour and our feelings and thoughts.
- Helps to *understand* and *respond* to other's feelings, thoughts, knowledge and behaviour.

# Verbal communication

Use of words, numbers and symbols.

Tone, pitch, quality and rate of speech carries more weight than the words

The latter convey the emotions and meaning, regardless of the content of the message

# Non-verbal communication

Facial expressions

Eye contact,

Gestures

Body language and posture

Proximity and touch

Most of our communication is non-verbal

# Facial expressions

Your face can show many feelings

**Smile covers the most part of facial expression:**

**Smiling is a powerful cue that transmits:**

**Happiness**



**Friendliness**

**Warmth**

**Liking**

**Affiliation**



# Eye contact

Maintaining appropriate **eye contact** when speaking with others helps communication. Be aware of **cultural differences** where this may not be appropriate



# Gestures

Also convey meanings

Be mindful of cultural  
differences

Waving

Making a fist

Thumbs up

Pointing

Nodding

Yawning

# **Body language (kinesics)**

**A great deal of your (true) message can be communicated by your body use and posture**

**To work effectively with others**

**you need to read body language and ensure you are not conveying the wrong signals**

# Communication barriers

- **Inattention**
- **Poor expression**
- **Physical barriers**
- **Insufficient warning**
- **Individual differences**
- **Lack of feedback**
- **Inference**
- **Insecurity**
- **Premature evaluation**
- **Emotions**
- **Inconsistency**



# People change

**Discuss the following:**

**What we know of other people is only our memory of the moments during which we knew them. And they have changed since then... at every meeting we are meeting a stranger.**

**T.S. Eliot, *The Cocktail Party***

# Active listening

- Letting a person know you have heard them, both literally and emotionally
- Encourages further discussion and checks accuracy of message
- **Active listening expresses empathy**

# Optimal listening



**Ting**, the Chinese verb for listening, contains five elements:

**Ears:** hearing

**Eyes:** body language, looking away

**King:** the other person feels important = listened to

**Undivided attention:** good listening means you are 100% focused on the other person's message, not your own thoughts

**Heart:** picking up the emotions, 'reading between the lines', empathy, 'gut feelings'. Some professionals are great with facts, but miss the subtleties.

**If all these are in place, then you are actively listening.**

**S.O.L.E.R.** is a technique to help improve your communication skills, in particular, your active listening skills. This will help assist more effective communication.

**Sit/Stand Squarely** in relation to the person

**O**pen position

**L**ean slightly towards the person

**E**ye contact

**R**elax

**Square:** face the person, or slightly off direct facing (although for blokes sometimes 'shoulder-to-shoulder' can be best)

**Open:** No barriers e.g. arms crossed, tables between etc

**Lean:** indicates interest (and helps hearing)

**Eye:** but remembering social and cultural rules (you are not on a date)

**Relax:** be yourself. Relax is the most important

# Effective communication

**Prepare:** Review topic and previous contact

**Inquire:** Ask questions, stay alert, check

**Listen actively:** Paraphrase, feedback, listen 'between the lines'

**Evaluate:** Draw conclusions, what can you do better, plan for next time

# **FEW FACTS**

- You have over 630 muscles in your body.
- Eye muscles are the busiest muscles in the body. Scientists estimate they may move more than 100,000 times a day.
- You have over 30 muscles in your face to help you smile or frown. It takes 17 muscles to smile and 43 to frown.  
**SO SMILE EVERYTIME YOU SEE SOMEONE.**
- The strongest muscle in your body is your tongue.  
**USE IT EFFECTIVELY.**
- It takes the interaction of 72 different muscles to produce human speech.

# EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION SKILLS

- **Presentation Skills while appearing for an interview.**
  - **Your Dressing sense (Males & Females),**
  - **Documents needed to be carried,**
  - **Your body language (while standing, while sitting, while walking),**
  - **Your attitude (Soberness, Soft words, avoid western accent),**
  - **Your Confidence (while talking, body movements, aggression, etc).**

**Thanks for your Attention**