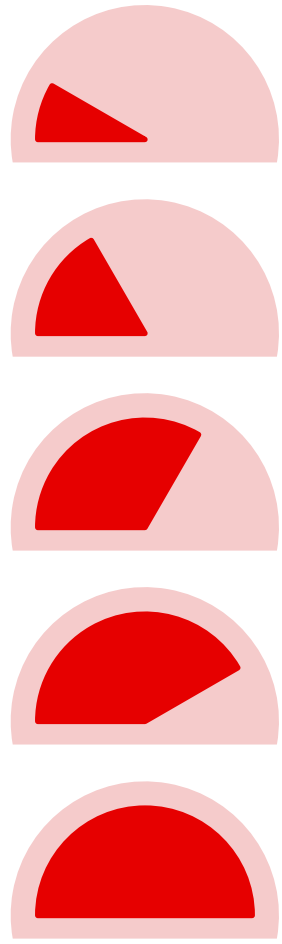


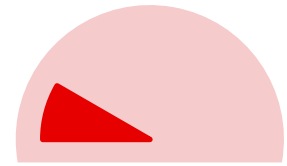
# Covert Communication & You



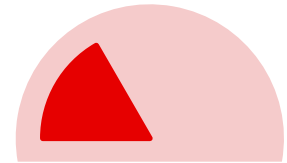
A Discussion-Based  
Best Practices Review  
by Kimberly Manchester



# Using Body Language to Your Advantage



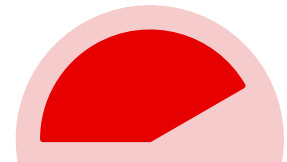
Expressions



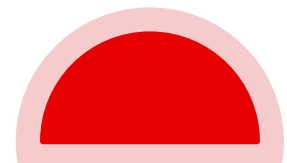
Proximity



Extremities



Posture & Gait



Ornamentation

# About Face

Humans are capable of making over 10,000 facial expressions to convey the nuances of our every mood and emotion.

- Raised **eyebrows** can express...
- A furrowed **forehead** can mean...
- Do exposed **teeth** mean happiness or aggression?
- **Neck** muscles can show tension and stress
- What thoughts can you express using only your **eyes**?



# About Face



Facial expressions are a **near-universal** form of body language

Across **cultures**, the expressions used to express happiness, anger, fear, and sadness are **nearly identical**, regardless world region, country of origin, or sex

Knowing this information, you can use your facial expressions to send a message **without speaking** a word

# About Face



People judge you by your **facial expressions** before you even have a chance to speak!

- A smiling face gives the impression of **happiness** and intelligence
- An angry scowl gives the impression of **lower intelligence**
- Shifting eyes make people think that you are **not trustworthy**

**Fun Fact:** Only 10% of people can control their outer eye muscles, the muscles that create lines when we smile. No laugh lines mean the smile is forced and fake.

# About Face

Once we are aware of what our **facial expressions** are telling people, we can

- Consciously use facial movements to **covertly** communicate or to send a message from a distance
- Concentrate on remaining **stoic** to prevent transferring information we would prefer to keep private



# The Closer I Get To You...

How much proximal space we need – and how much we give – sends a telling message about how we feel about the people in our surroundings

There are four types of proximal space:

- Intimate
- Personal
- Social
- Public



# The Closer I Get To You...



**Intimate space** indicates a close, personal relationship between two people

It consists of 6" – 18" (15 cm – 45 cm) between people

It occurs during **hugging, greetings, intimate conversation**, and other activities that require close contact

It suggests a close and **comfortable** relationship between the people involved

Intimate space may indicate a **sexual** relationship, but it is not limited to such relationships



# The Closer I Get To You...



**Personal space** indicates a familiar relationship between two people – generally close **friendships** and **family** members

It consists of 18” to 4’ (45 cm to 1.22 m) between people

It occurs during both **casual** and **business** conversation

The **amount of space** between people indicates the closeness of the relationship

As relationships develop, the amount of personal space needed between two people can be **observed** to decrease

# The Closer I Get To You...



**Social space** indicates a relationship between people who are acquaintances, but not necessarily friends

It consists of 4' to 12' (1.22m to 3.66 m) between people

Social space is the type of space most frequently observed in the office, between **co-workers**

Close co-workers will generally put less space between them than they put between themselves and their **managers**

# The Closer I Get To You...



**Public space** is used when presenting to an audience – a lecturer and the attendees, a teacher and the students, a performer and the audience

It consists of 12' to 25' (3.66 m to 7.62 m) between people

Public space is observed between **strangers**, as well

Often times, strangers will **cross the street** to avoid passing each other on a sidewalk. Regardless of intent, the result is the creation of **public space**

# Going to the Extreme...



Our **hands** and **feet** can put people at ease or raise alarm, depending on their positioning:

Would you feel more comfortable being approached by someone with **clenched fists** or **open palms**? Why?

# Going to the Extreme...



A **clenched fist** is a sign that someone is ready to **fight** – to start one, or to defend themselves in one

An **open palm** shows that the person has **nothing to hide** – they are not holding a weapon, nor are they prepared to punch

# Going to the Extreme...



The **positioning** of your **feet** can also put people at ease or make them judge you harshly

When speaking with someone, would you rather their **feet** be facing **forward** or at an **angle**?

# Going to the Extreme...



When feet are **facing forward**, we are in a position to attack or run, indicating that danger is near

When a person's feet are set **outward** at a 45-degree angle, we are unable to run forward (try it and see how far you get!)

This indicates **comfort** with your surroundings, and **safety** for the person to whom you are speaking

Feet turned **inward** (for non-medical reasons) buckle our knees and make us slouch, giving us the appearance of being bored

# I Walk the Line...

Our posture and gait can communicate how we see ourselves

- Standing tall indicates self-assuredness and leadership
- Poor posture or slumped shoulders indicates powerlessness
- Long smooth strides indicate confidence in your purpose; short, mincing steps the opposite
- Walking a straight line communicates honesty
- Walking in a zigzag pattern gives the impression you are scattered and disorganized in your thinking





# I Walk the Line...



Our posture and gait can communicate how we see ourselves

- Standing **tall** indicates self-assuredness and **leadership**
- Poor posture or **slumped** shoulders indicates a feeling of **powerlessness** or low energy

# I Walk the Line...



To temporarily improve posture, imagine you are being pulled by a string attached to your head

To improve posture long-term, work to strengthen your core muscles

# I Walk the Line...

The major **core muscles** of the back are:

- Trapezius – the muscle that runs from the top of your spine and across your **upper back**
- Latissimus dorsi – the large muscle that under your armpits and wraps your **lower back**
- Erector spinae/sacrospinalis – the long muscles that run along the sides of your **spine**
- Gluteus maximus and medius – the muscles in the lowest portion of your **spine** and **hip** (yes, your butt)



# I Walk the Line...



The major **core muscles** of the **front** are:

- External obliques – the flat muscles on the **sides** of your abdominal region
- Rectus abdominus – the **abdominal** muscles that run up and down your torso (the divider that gives you a “six pack”)
- Diaphragm – the dome-shaped muscle that separates your upper and lower **torso**

# Waving a Red Flag...



**Ornamentation** is a form of body language that is completely under our own control

Style of **clothing** and **shoes** – casual or formal, clean or dirty, long or short, heels or flats

**Colors** worn – bright, muted, neutral, hot/warm, cool/cold

**Accessories** and **jewelry** – costume or fine, watch or bracelet, rings or wedding bands, scarves, hats, gloves

**Hair** Style – short or long, pulled back or loose, traditional or trendy, colored or natural, facial hair or clean shaven

# Waving a Red Flag...



Style of **clothing** and **shoes** can make us blend in or stand out in a crowd:

- Bill Gates vs. Steve Jobs
- Warren Buffer vs. Mark Zuckerberg
- Laura Bush vs. Melania Trump

# Waving a Red Flag...

The **colors** we choose to wear send an unspoken message

- **Red** projects power and strong leadership
- **Orange** suggests caution is advised
- **Blue** is a calming force
- Neutral tones (black, white, brown) suggest conservative or traditional values



# Waving a Red Flag...

The **jewelry** we choose to wear – or not wear – can tell people about our social status

- Wedding ring, college/university ring or membership ring
- Watch, FitBit, or fashion bracelet
- Heirloom pieces or costume jewelry





# Waving a Red Flag...



How we wear our **hair** and **groom** gives clues to our background

- Men's hair cut "high and tight" indicates military service (current or formerly long-serving)
- A bearded man is not currently serving in the U.S. Army
- An Amish man without a beard is most certainly single

# Waving a Red Flag...



How we wear our **hair** and **groom** gives clues to our background

- A woman who straightens her curly hair is looking to be taken more seriously
- A woman who wears heavy makeup is very conscious about her looks
- A woman who keeps a fine manicure does not do heavy labor

# Summary



## Expressions

Humans are capable of making over 10,000 facial expressions to convey the nuances of our every mood and emotion, are nearly universal in meaning, and make a strong first impression.



## Proximity

How close or far we stand from someone indicates how we feel about them. The closer we stand, the more comfortable we are in their presence. Intimately close can indicate romantic or sexual feeling for the other person.



## Extremities

The positioning of our hands and feet send a message to people before we have even said a word, and can be seen from several feet/meters away; make sure that they are sending the message you want to communicate.



## Posture & Gait

Posture and gait communicate confidence level; they can make us appear honest or disorganized (and therefore untrustworthy).



## Ornamentation

Our style of dress and use of color, accessories, and grooming send a message. Ornamentation is a type of body language that is completely under our control.



**Questions?**