Power of Nonverbal Communication in Project Management

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Abstract-In today's world, managing a project involves managing team members with diverse backgrounds in terms of economic level, educational level, lifestyle, sexual orientation, geographical & regional differences, experiences, perspectives and many other descriptors. The presence of these types of differences may cause conflicts and put the project in peril. Therefore, in modern project management, focusing only on the classical communication styles may not be enough – project managers need to focus on nonverbal communication as well, in order to make project a success. Nonverbal communication is defined as the non-linguistic messages that are consciously or unconsciously encoded and decoded through various mediums such as facial expressions, body language gestures, space, touch, eye contact, time and tone in the environment in which the people communicate. Study done by PMI (Project Management Institute) shows that a successful project manager spends 70% to 90% of his project time in communication. Further, researchers in the arena of non-verbal communication have found that nonverbal communication accounts for 55 percent of the whole communication. Thus, understanding and proper use of nonverbal communication leads to a congenial atmosphere in project ecosystem, which in turn leads to a successful project. This paper will discuss, what communication means in a project, 5W1H (What, Why, Who, Where, When and How) of communication, nonverbal communications and its elements and conclude with highlighting the importance of nonverbal communication in project management.

Keywords : Communication, nonverbal communication, 5W1H,project , project manager, project management

INTRODUCTION

The word communication derives from the Latin word *communis*, which means common. When we communicate, we try to establish "commonness" with others .A project tries to share information, an idea, or an attitude among the team involved in a particular project.

Harold Dwight Lasswell, an American political scientist states that a convenient way to describe an act of communication is to answer the following questions :

- Who
- Says What
- In Which Channel
- To Whom
- With what effect?

Communication is not an absolute, finite thing. One can never take for granted that the receiver will interpret the message the same way as the sender intended it. To do this effectively, the project manager needs to consider all the factors like the different realities, the space the communication takes place in, verbal as well as non-verbal messages, and the intended meaning versus the perceived meaning, etc.

Understanding the Communications Process

To communicate effectively, project managers must have a good understanding of the communications process .The communication process can be pictorially presented as given below :
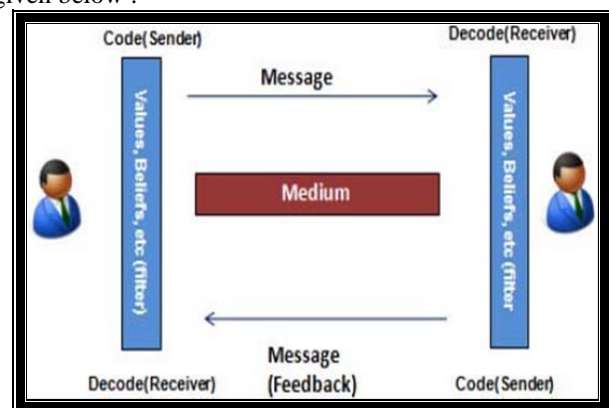

Figure 1. The Communications Process

To understand the communications process, project managers must understand all the relevant factors.

Sender: This refers to the person who first initiates the communication. Let's say a document related to the project is being faxed by the project manager.

Encoder: This device encodes the message to be sent. In this case, it is the fax machine.

Medium: This is the device or technology to transport the message between the encoder and the decoder. Here it is the telephone line.

Decoder: This device decodes the message to be received. Here it is the fax machine itself.

Receiver: This refers to the person who receives the communication finally. The receiver may interpret the information, make a comment, and send it back to the sender.

Feedback: The communication may be disrupted by noise and misinterpret the message. A part of the message may be faded out or discolored etc. This would have been caused by the distortion of phone line.

There are different types of communication such as verbal, written and non-verbal (Verma, 1996; Mehta, 2008). Verbal communication gives a lot of flexibility to the speaker. It is mainly used in face to face meetings, group meetings and over the telephone. While communicating verbally, the speaker can communicate with voice as well as body language. Written communication on the other

hand is usually more precise (Mehta, 2008). Written communication can be in the form of letters, memos, notices, emails, reports, proposals memoranda etc. Another type of communication is the non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication refers to a speaker's actions and attributes that are not purely verbal. It can be reflected in the way people dress, their tone and stance while talking, their gestures, facial expressions and their body language (Verma, 1996).

Communication is a vital element of a well-managed project. There are two main groups of people with whom the project manager needs to ensure clear and effective communication, the stakeholders and the project team. Every project will be sponsored by a part of the business with a stake in the outcome. They will likely be represented on the project board, which sets the objectives for the project and monitors progress over time. The project board will include others with a stake in the outcome, for example, those who will need to implement the project outcomes and those who will need to supply resource once the project outcomes have been met. All of these stakeholders will need regular updates, and it is imperative that communication with them is regular, clear and complete.

In addition, projects often involve the need for the project manager to coordinate the work of a large group of people working on different aspects of the project (often referred to as work streams). The project manager is required to ensure that everyone is clear about what he or she must achieve and he or she also needs to clearly report on progress to the project board and/or project sponsors. There are many opportunities for things to go badly wrong if an effective communication is not established and maintained.

Based on stakeholder analysis, the project manager and the project team can determine the communications that are needed. There is no advantage of supplying stakeholders with information that isn't needed or desired, and the time spent creating and delivering such information is a waste of resources.A communications management plan can organize and document the process, types, and expectations of communications.

5W1H (Why, What, When, Where, Who & 1H) of communication -

Figure 2 : The 5 "W's" and 1 "H"

- *Who* needs to be communicated to. This is based on the communication formula and needs to be determined.
- *What* needs to be communicated. All information related to the project need not be communicated to everyone in the team.
- *When* it should be communicated. The timeline of communication should be monitored.
- *Where* should it be communicated. If the team involves many people, then individual level and team level communications needs to be resolved.
- *Why* communication of information is essential and to what level is important. Why is it not encouraged as it is blame rather than change.
- *How* the communication needs to be done. Is it conducted via e-mail, phone, or a presentation done to the team members?
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Importance of communication project management

Communication is an important skill for project managers to accomplish effective project management (Analoui, 1993). This skill is vital because part of management is motivating people to perform their assigned duties to the best of their ability (Perret, 1982; Scott, 1989). "Effective communication is the key to success for the individual as well as for the project" (Verma, 1996, p.23). By using communication skills, the project manager help to plan, direct, control and coordinate their operations throughout the project life cycle (Verma, 1996). Most of the communication activities of project managers involve interpersonal communication and project communications, sharing information with the project team members and other stakeholders. Communication is the nerve system of leadership, teamwork, cooperation and control. It determines the quality of relationships, levels of satisfaction, the extent of project's success or failure.

Cleland and King (1988) in a study of fifty project managers found that managers named communication as one of the vital ingredients for successful project implementation. Moreover, Morris and Hough (1986) also argues that clear communication is necessary for project success and that effective communication is the key to high staff morale which is vital for project success. According to Ruuska (1996, p.67) "More than half of the management problems in projects are more or less caused by poorly looked-after communication". Communication acts as a resource as well as tool in project management. As a resource, communication can be compared to other project resources such as time, money, people and equipment. It should be taken into consideration when planning along with the resources. On the other hand, communication is a tool which can be used for effective utilization of other project resources. Communication helps in developing relationships in the organization (Ruuska, 1996). A project manager uses communication more than any other element in the project management process to ensure that the team members are working cohesively on project problems and opportunities (Verma, 1996).

Communication plays an important role in connecting different parts of an organization together and its external

environment (Taylor and Watling, 1979). In an organization, communication is needed to inform the members about the on-going status of the project. For an effective management, it is necessary to have a two way communication channel, to and fro in and across a project organization. A good communication channel can also allow progress to be monitored; difficulties to be reported back to the executive management and expert specialist can advise on technical or commercial problems to be sought by any participant (Keeling, 2003).

Communication plays an important role in influencing the whole organization that may be affected and not only those immediately involved in the change. However, the importance of communication is often neglected in many projects (Toney and Power, 1997). Furthermore, lack of communication also results in many failures in change projects (Orr and McKenzie, 1992). Failure to maintain adequate information flows, conflict among project staff or between project administrators and professional staff, as being among some of the causes for inadequate execution, operation and supervision in projects (Rondinelli, 1977). These problems which are in essence communication problems are likely contributors to project failure. Hammond (1990) states that if the intrinsic difficulties such as limitation of funds are taken away, the reason some projects fail is because of problems with people, problems that effective communication could go a long way in solving. Lack of effective communication may lead to misunderstanding. Frustration can be seen in employers due to ineffective or poor communication and may result in conflicts. Communication breakdown is a prime cause of discord or conflict (Keeling, 2003).

However, how important is this communication in project management, we can say that this is the Life Blood, as everything in a project is based on how efficiently we perform this. Communication is an essential tool in the field of project management. It is gaining importance everyday and is the center of all management processes soon. The success of a project largely depends on the efficiency of its communication network. It starts working from day one of the venture and continues for the entire life span of the project. It provides regular updates to notify the status of the project as well as its performance capacity. But surprisingly, it has been found that most projects experience a breakdown in communications. It has been said that 90% of a project manager's time is spent communicating what is going to be done. This paper details what communication means in a project, the steps required for effective communication, the major obstacles in communication, how to overcome obstacles through communication sharing, the importance of communications in diverse work groups, and a four-step process for effective communication.

Non verbal communication :

Albert Mehrabian, an there are three elements in face to face communications: words, tone of voice and body language. These three elements account differently for our liking for the person who puts forward the message: words account for 7%, tone of voice accounts for 38%, and body language accounts for 55% of the liking. They are often abbreviated as the "3 Vs" for Verbal, Vocal & Visual and also known as the "7%-38%-55% Rule". (1971, p. 43). Thus, it becomes more likely that the receiver will trust the predominant form of communication, which to Mehrabian's findings is the non-verbal impact of tone+gestures (38% + 55%), rather than the literal meaning of the words (7%). This is known as "the 7%-38%-55% Rule".

Non verbal communication refers to the communication by any means other than language. It includes communications through various behavioural and expressive channel of communications viz facial expression,bodily gestures,eye contact,vocal tone & pitch,space, time of environment in which he communication takes place as well as quasiverbal vocal behaviors such as interruptions,speech error, hesitations etc.

Words, tone and body language need to support each other to produce congruent and consistent messages. A message impacted by emotions will produce incongruent messages in which words do not match non-verbal cues.

For effective and meaningful communication about emotions, these three parts of the message need to support and complement one another.

Brief history of Non verbal communication

Charles Darwin's book *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* is first known documented research work in the field of nonverbal communication and behavior in 1872.In the book, Darwin argued that all mammals, both humans and animals, showed emotion through facial expressions. He posed questions such as: "Why do our facial expressions of emotions take the particular forms they do?" and "Why do we wrinkle our nose when we are disgusted and bare our teeth when we are enraged?". Darwin attributed these facial expressions to serviceable associated habits, which are behaviors that earlier in our evolutionary history had specific and direct functions. For example, a species that attacked by biting, baring the teeth was a necessary act before an assault and wrinkling the nose reduced the inhalation of foul odors. The study done by Darwin shows that human beings continue to make facial expressions because they have acquired communicative value throughout evolutionary history. In other words, humans use facial expressions as external evidence of their internal state.

Despite the introduction of nonverbal communication in the 1800s, the emergence of behaviorism in the 1920s paused further research on nonverbal communication. Behaviorism is defined as the study of human and animal behavior as acquired through conditioning. B.F. Skinner, a noted Behaviorist studied behavior of pigeons to demonstrate how animals engage in behaviors with rewards.

While most psychology researchers were exploring behaviorism, the study of nonverbal communication began in 1955 by Adam Kendon, Albert Scheflen, and Ray Birdwhistell. They applied an analytic method called context analysis which was later used in studying the sequence and structure of human greetings, social behaviors at parties, and the function of posture during interpersonal interaction. Ray Birdwhistell further did

pioneering study in the area of nonverbal communication through body movements and gestures serve as a form of non-verbal communication which later on help in developing a new area in non-verbal communication , named "kinesics". The study had found that humans can make and recognize around 250,000 facial expressions.

Research on nonverbal communication gathered momentum during the mid1960s with a number of social psychologists and researchers got into pioneering works in this field. Argyle and Dean's (1965) equilibrium theory's discovers an inverse relationship between mutual gaze, a nonverbal cue signaling intimacy, and interpersonal distance Ralph V. Exline examined patterns of looking while speaking and looking while listening. Robert Sommer studied how personal space and the environment play a role in human activities and the study was documented in his book *Personal Space: The Behavioral Basis of Design* (1969). Robert Rosenthal,a noted social psychologist, did pioneering work through his research work " *experimenter expectancy effects*" to study the influence that a researcher can exert on the outcome of a research. Albert Mehrabian studied the nonverbal cues of liking and immediacy. By the 1970s, a number of scholarly volumes in psychology summarized the growing body of research, such as Shirley Weitz's *Nonverbal Communication* and Marianne LaFrance and Clara Mayo's *Moving Bodies.*Popular books included *Body Language* (Fast, 1970), which focused on how to use nonverbal communication to attract other people, and *How to Read a Person Like a Book* (Nierenberg & Calero, 1971) which examined nonverbal behavior in negotiation situations The *Journal of Environmental Psychology* and *Nonverbal Behavior* were also founded in 1978. Eckhard Hess studied the extent of pupil dilation in non verbal communication - the study were published in *Scientific American*.

ELEMENTS OF NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Extensive researches in the field of non verbal communications discovers many elements vocal and visual elements of communication such as Kinesis is focused on corporal gestures, Proxemics studies being space, Haptics studies physical interaction and touch, Oc ulesics is focused on eye contact, Chronemics studies the perception of time, and Paralinguistic focuses on vocal tone.

Kinesics

Kinesics commonly known as "body language" is the study of bodily movements and facial gestures such as nonverbal behaviour related to movement, either of any part of the body or the body as a whole. Kinesics was first used in 1952 by the anthropologist Ray Birdwhistell who started studies on how people communicate through posture, gesture, stance, and movement; states that all movements of the body are not accidental and have meaning and a grammar that can be analyzed as the spoken language (Birdwhistell, 1970). The element of body movement or "kineme" is "similar to a phoneme because it consists of a group of movements which are not identical, but which

may be used interchangeably without affecting social meaning" (Hall & Knapp 1992, p.94-95).

Some people speak with their gestures. They tend to use all those facial and body gestures to complement or emphasise portions of the conversation or to add nonverbal comments to the conversation. Sometimes, these gestures are unique to a particular community or national and these may confuse someone does not belong to that community or national.

Smiling is another ingredient in conversations and again, depending on the context, it may be have positive or negative connotations. It may be used to greet or thank people and as a sign of acceptance or rejection. Non-Latin may feel that the smiling is not appropriate in some context of the conversation. On the other hand, Latins may perceive Non-Latins as cold and unfriendly.

Moreover, our limbs can be leaking messages that can be controlled for a polished delivery when making presentations or arguments. While you may not want to necessarily talk with your hands, appropriate gestures can drive your point home. In using gestures, make them large enough to be noticed, but not at the price of violating someone's personal space. Many individuals can remember gestures easier and longer than words (Bernstein, 1994). Establish illustrators to important concepts. Verbalize a key point while displaying a very distinct gesture to coincide with your words. Do the combination again, and perhaps a third time. After that the gesture alone will suffice to remind your team what's important.

The position of the body is yet another focus of kinesics. Lean your body toward the person speaking to you, and you will send a message of interest and attention. Body orientation is another way to send kinesic messages. Open body orientation (uncrossed arms, full confrontational stance) are not natural for most of us, but communicates honesty and bravery (Briton & Hall, 1995). If there's four things every project could use it would certainly be interest, attentiveness, honesty, and bravery!

As with most nonverbal cues, the problem we have most is not being aware that we are sending any messages at all (Anderson, 1999). Research shows that the farther away from the head you go, the more your body reveals your true emotions (Bernstein, 1994), as in shaking your foot during formal situations. Though you may be poker-faced on the outside, your foot says that on the inside you may be nervous, uncomfortable, anxious, or feeling confined. Kinesics can powerfully assist your cause when brought under control.

Oculesics

Oculesics is the study of the use of the eyes in interpersonal communications. Usually referred as "eye contact"; this is a form of nonverbal communication and has a large influence on social behavior. "The eyes are the window to the soul" is one such cliché which underpins the importance of nonverbal communication through eye contact.

Frequency and interpretation of eye contact varies among different communities and nationals .A steady look into the eyes when speaking may be construed as an attempt to maintain, acknowledge and establish credibility and trust

with the interlocutor but on the other side ,this behavior may be misinterpreted by someone from other community or nationality as "lack of confidence" or "not being totally truthful" or "challenging" or " showing angry feelings ". Depending on the context the prolonged eye contact could also be associated to flirting.

In East Asia, eye contact can provoke misunderstandings between people of different nationalities. Keeping direct eye contact with a work supervisor or elderly persons leads them to assume you are being an aggressive or rude individual.

In a study by Johnson (1997), gaze was linked to power and surveillance. A steady gaze when addressing your team not only delivers a message of control, but also underscores trust, and trust is a foot in the door for persuasion and gaining compliance (Bernstein, 1994). Conversely, averting your eyes from team members sometimes says that you're unsure of your message, you're not showing the big picture, or you are not sincere. When addressing meetings or teams, allow your eyes fall on each member in turn for about four seconds. Always look at the member you are speaking to or who is speaking to you.

Eyes can be friendly, political, and even assault weapons (Berstein, 1994). There is, of course, a fine line between acknowledging team members and staring holes through them! Notice what length of time people look at you when speaking to you, and note what makes you comfortable and uncomfortable, then work that into your own actions. Controlling eye movement and contact is the starting point for inviting team members into your vision of how the project should run.

Proxemics

Proxemics is the study of space in interpersonal relationships. This is the non-transgressible distance one stands from another person when speaking. We all appreciate the importance of "elbow room," and proxemics takes a look at the use of space in communication (Anderson, 1999). In Hall's *The Hidden Dimension* (1966), he defines the term personal space as the region surrounding each person, or the area which a person considers their domain or territory. Often if entered by another being without this being desired, it makes them feel uncomfortable. The amount of space ,someone needs falls into two categories, immediate individual physical space (determined by imagined boundaries), and the space an individual considers theirs to live in (often called habitat). These are dependent on many things, such as growth needs, habits, courtships, etc.

The old standby is that people who take more space have more power (larger office, larger rental car). Be sure to take your appropriate amount of space when addressing meetings. Hands in the lap or barely visible make your input to meetings less visible. Move through and use the space around you, not only to communicate strength, but to keep all eyes on you as well (Bernstein, 1994). Once again knowing the people around you helps to judge space issues. Some of us simply need more space than others. Be sensitive to the fact that people are backing away when you

walk up. First, check your breath, and then realize you may be simply standing too close for comfort!

Once again, proxemics are governed heavily by cultural norms and individual preferences. Geography actually plays a large role in proxemics.

Those who live in a densely populated environment tend to have smaller personal space requirements. Thus a resident of China & India may have a smaller personal space than someone who is a resident of Greenland or Falkland Islands. It can be determined on a habitat level by profession, livelihood, and occupation. Personal space can also be heavily affected by a person's position in society, with the more affluent a person being the larger personal space they demand.

No matter where we're from it is natural for us to be territorial, so check yourself before grabbing someone's pen or other item they may consider their own. Often people place things around them (papers, pens, coffee mug) as proxemic markers of their territories. Crossing those markers usually gives a negative impression to the territory owner. Therefore, a balance must be struck between using the space you need to establish your agenda and being respectful of others' territories.

Haptics

Haptics is the study of touch in nonverbal communications. For humans, touch is an extremely important sense since it provides information about surfaces and textures and is an important component of nonverbal communication in interpersonal relationships.

Hesling (1974, p10) outlines five haptic categories: (a) Functional/professional (b) Social/polite (c) Friendship/warmth (d) Love/intimacy & (d) Sexual/arousal Due to the nature of this paper only the first two categories will be addressed.

Touch on the forearm or upper arm when combined with the right words has been shown to increase compliance in research subjects as much as 30% over words alone (Remland & Jones, 1994). Of course the best-known haptic behavior in business is the handshake, and through the centuries has been a symbol of trust and cooperation. It is of great importance, however, to know with whom you are dealing when it comes to touch.

Different community, nationality, cultures and age groups have higher levels of touch avoidance than others (Hofstede in Anderson, 1999), as does every individual. Many HR professional would agree that this is the nonverbal code you want to be most careful with. Others make sense of this world based on their own preferences and not your intentions (Madonik, 1990).Some examples include male-female and female-female kissing each other's cheeks as a form to say hello. In countries like Argentina and Uruguay male-male kissing each other cheeks is also accepted, which may be confusing for others.

Forms of touching like light striking, pushing, pulling, pinching and kicking; or simulating strangling or hand-to-hand fighting are used some countries both in informal environments or in the context of business conversation while this kind of touching may be misinterpreted and

uncomfortable for Non-Latin and could be considered as physical abuse in other countries.

In the last 15 to 20 years touching in professional environments has become a controlled behavior in countries with strict sexual harassment policies. In many global corporations these policies apply to all branches which may represent conflicts between corporate and local culture.

Social and polite category addresses touching in other environments where an individual interacts. For this purpose. researchers designed a blueprint for touchable and non touchable areas. Touchable areas are referred as Non-vulnerable body parts (NVBP) that include the hand, arm, shoulder and upper back, and vulnerable body parts (VBP) are all other body regions (Jones & Yarbrough, pp 19-56, 1985).

Chronemics

Chronemics is the study of time perception in nonverbal communication. Different cultures have different perceptions and reactions to time including punctuality, willingness to wait, and interactions. The use of time can affect lifestyles, daily agendas, speed of speech, and movements.

Time perception categories are Monochronic and Polychronic. Cultures which has monochronic perception are committed to regimented schedules and may view those who do not subscribe to the same perception of time as disrespectful.

"Time is money" is a well known saying across the world that fits the time perception of which views time as valuable, a scarce resource. They attach the language of money to time: spend it, save it, waste it, and budget it. The uses of calendar software to monitor, coordinate, and fill schedules much like the use of financial software to track chequebooks (Peterson, 2004, Part 4).

In American and Canadian society, making others wait is generally considered undesirable but is less offensive the more power the late person is perceived to have. This can be an adverse effect if you're trying to level-set and foster a team environment.

Also, time is an indicator of status and power. For example, the boss can interrupt daily project progress to hold an impromptu meeting during the middle of the work day, yet the average worker would have to make an appointment to see the boss.

While cultures which believes in Polychronic perception are less focused on the preciseness of accounting for each and every moment instead, their culture is more focused on relationships, rather than watching the clock. There is no problem being "late" for an event if they are with family or friends, because the relationship is what really matters.

A sweet example of the polychronic time perception in Mexico is the wedding ceremony invitations. The invitation will state the place and the time where the wedding ceremony will take place. It is common practice to print the time one hour before the actual time of the ceremony, perhaps to make sure that guests will be on time for the ceremony.

Project managers can hardly say that "time is on our side.". Thus knowledge of chronemics can help get another aspect of our communication under control. Another aspect of chronemics that is usually difficult for a project manager to accommodate is the amount of time spent with individuals on the team. All the memos and voice mail in the world, no matter how well intended, can't replace sit-down evaluation time and two-way communication.

Vocalics:

Vocalics is the study of voice and everything having to do with speech for the words we actually utter and how words are said. When our mouths open we reveal numerous things about ourselves that have nothing at all to do with the words we are uttering and manipulating the nonverbal elements of our message can completely change its meaning.

Vocalics, the nonverbal qualities of our voice, are important to understand in any situation, but vital in today's growing trend of multisite teams, where you may not be known by anything other than your voice.

Elements of vocalics include tempo quality, volume, pitch, intensity and accent. According to research, by using various qualities of the voice, there are more than 25 ways we can say the word "yes." Such easy things as slightly increasing tempo to in speech to rally the troops, or punctuating every syllable to drive home a point can clarify and make presentations much more dynamic. As with kinesics (leaning the body toward someone) and haptics (light touch to the forearm with fingertips), vocalics in the form of a pleasant tone of voice is actually considered an immediacy cue that draws people in and makes them feel more comfortable in unfamiliar situations. On the other hand, continue to keep in mind cross-cultural preferences!

Investigations into vocal volume have led to conclusions that our cultures define how loud our voices should be for different situations (Remland & Jones, 1994). One communication theory called "Expectancy Violation" posits that whatever volume falls outside of our perceived norm for a given situation will intrigue and arouse us in either a positive or negative way (Anderson, Guerrero, Buller, & Jorgensen, 1998). If you audience seems to be slipping away, a subtle adjustment in volume could do the trick.

Artifacts:

The clothes, shoes,the jewelry and everything else we choose to surround ourselves with are all considered artifacts in communication lingo. Just as archeological artifacts are all we have to reconstruct ancient and mysterious civilizations, so are your artifacts all unfamiliar team members have to create an impression of you. McCoy (1996) reports that it only takes six to twelve seconds to establish a first impression. Once that impression is set, negative behaviors are more easily forgiven with a positive impression, but for a negative impression, the subject can do no right!

We've all heard the term "dress for success," but like the other codes, there are many ways to send messages you don't intend at all. One can't help to what level people will

go to make assumptions about oneself based on one's coffee mug, pen etc, so the best one can do is to give a thought to whether or not one wants to change what those things say about oneself. Don't be afraid to wear your intentions on your sleeve!

Non verbal skills

Nonverbal skills are defined as such skills which describe one's abilities to use nonverbal communication effectively .It has two sub-skills viz encoding skills and decoding skills.

a) Encoding skills – It refers to ability to communicate emotions, attitudes or other messages through nonverbal cues so that observer can interpret

b) Decoding skills - It refers to ability to interpret the nonverbal communication of other people.

Both encoding and decoding skills vary considerably among people. Encoding and decoding skills are not very highly correlated ie a person good at one skill need not be necessarily good at other skill. Empirical studies have shown that women are more accurate encoders as well as deciders of nonverbal communication than men.

CONCLUSION

Non-verbal communication is an extremely complex yet integral part of overall communication skills. A basic awareness of non-verbal communication elements, over and above what is actually said, can help to improve interaction with others. Knowledge of these signs can be used to encourage team members to talk about their concerns and can lead to a greater shared understanding, which is, after all, the purpose of communication.

In the global environment where most of the projects operate, it is important to deal with cultural differences in communications. Nonverbal communications in multicultural teams are challenging for global organizations and without special attention, the team performance may fall short of company and team member expectations. Project managers need to be mindful, respectful or empathetic towards various non-verbal communications prevalent in those cultures. He/She needs to develop both he encoding & decoding skills to switch cultural channels ,particularly when he is managing a multicultural team. Once mastered, this new ability lowers levels of pain, confusion, frustration and discomfort that occur due to misperception, misinterpretation and misunderstanding.

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