

Professional Presence: Managing Non-verbal Communications

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Why Be Aware of Professional Presence?

 According to "Overcoming Your Strengths" by Frankel, the third main reason why your career goal fails is Lack of attention to Personal Style and Communication.

Number two is **Inability to Function as a Member of the Team**.

Number one is **Failure to Build Interpersonal Relationships at Work**.



Elements of Professional Presence

- First Impressions
- Appearance
- Body Language
- Attitude
- Etiquette



First Impressions

- Research shows you have 30 seconds to make a first impression. Within that time, the beholder makes judgments about everything from our financial status to the color of the car we drive.
 - During the first 30 seconds, you are evaluated (accurately or not) on 3 factors:
 - Social and Economic Status
 - Educational Level
 - Desirability to know you better

NOTE: You never get a second chance to make a good first impression.



Criticality of First Impressions

- It is not moral or just to judge a person by the first impression: we need to pay more attention to what's inside the person. (Eventually we do, but not right away: in the meantime, many opportunities can be lost.)
- It is critical to project an image of confidence, ability, and integrity to everyone you deal with.
- We need our image to work for us, not against us.
- We need to portray an image that truly reflects who we are and makes other people respect and remember us.



Appearance

Attire: Business, Business Casual, Casual

 Determine what your personal style is. Consider your likes, dislikes and personality traits.

 Consider your audience – Think of the image you want to portray, and match that with your company and clients' expectations and dress codes.

 Be consistent with the environment in which you are working.



Your Nonverbal Communication Needs to Work FOR You, Not Against You



Exercise

"Test Your Knowledge of Non-Verbal Communication" Exercise



Body Language

- Handshake
- Posture
- Gestures
- Facial Expressions



Handshake

- Enhances communications
- Builds up the foundation for a successful exchange of information
- Handshakes should be warm, firm, and confident



Proper Handshake Technique

- Step forward
- Make eye contact
- Smile
- Extend your hand
- Give a firm and confident grasp
- Hold for a moment or two (count in your head until
 3)

NOTE: Grasping the other person's hand with both of your hands, might seem overpowering.

Tip: When you are not sure whether you should shake someone's hand, it's better to offer your hand than not to. It's always good to make a friendly gesture first.



Posture

- Posture can also communicate our interest and respect for someone. Turning your body to someone when they are talking indicates that you are interested in what they are talking about and shows friendliness and respect.
 - <u>Closed</u> crossed arms and legs. They create a barrier or protection from something that you do not feel comfortable with.
 - Open open arms, both feet on the ground and face towards the speaking person. It represents trust and comfort.



Posture

 Closed posture with a lean forward represents active resistance.

Tip: It is better to avoid contradictions or confrontations with that person at that moment.

Closed posture with a lean back represents boredom.

Tip: Good time to spark interest in any way you can.



Posture

 Open posture with a lean forward represents active acceptance.

Tip: Good time to close the sale, ask for agreement, etc.

 Open posture with a lean back represents interest, but not active acceptance.

Tip: Provides an opportunity to present more facts and incentives and let them think.



Gestures

- Can be a great tool in supporting your view and adding more significance to your point.
 - Broad controlled gestures emphasize your point or show you are paying attention to the conversation (e.g. nod, smile, etc.)
 - Nervous repetitive movements (e.g. biting your fingernails, playing with rings or pens, tapping your fingers, etc.) can be distracting to the conversation.
 - Keeping hands in your pockets can make you look indifferent or bored.
 - It's a good thing to keep your hand away from your face during a conversation. It can be distracting.



Facial Expressions

- Reveal more about our thoughts and feelings than words
- Not easy to interpret
- It takes practice to read facial expressions more accurately



So many meanings.....

 Tight, set lips can mean: Rigid, cautious, confused, uptight

 Raised eyebrows can mean: Surprised, angry, interested, flirtatious

 Smile can mean: Friendly, happy, outgoing, deceptive

 No expression can mean: Bored, disinterested, shy, neutral



Facial Expressions

- Good facial expressiveness the ability to vary your facial expressions, smile frequently and control your expressions when necessary to mask true feelings.
 - You have an auditee who is demanding and irritating. You may feel stressed and frustrated, yet you know you need to keep smiling and act in a pleasant manner without showing your irritation.
- <u>Fair facial expressiveness</u> an open, confident expression, but you are frequently aware of what your are conveying through your facial expressions.
 - You have confidential information that someone wants from you or people are talking about a subject in which you don't wish to get involved. A neutral expression can be an advantage in this situation.
- Poor facial expressiveness unaware of your facial expressions.
 - People misunderstand you. You can't determine why you need to defend what you say. You feel like people don't take you seriously. It may be because your facial expressions confuse your listener.

Attitude

- Your attitude can set up the mood for a one-time conversation or the whole business relationship.
- Contagious to others
- You can choose how to react to different situations
- Drive and enthusiasm can be more important than technical expertise



Ways to Improve or Keep Up Your Attitude

- Being negative or talking bad about the company or the people you are working with can lower the morale and create negative atmosphere in the office. Offering constructive solutions to problems can be a more positive way to improve the situation.
- Being energetic and showing other people that you are enjoying what you are doing shares your positive attitude with others.
- Being self-confident and believing in yourself makes you proud and confident of things you do.
- Treating everybody with respect, regardless of their position, makes others feel good about themselves and shows them they are important.



Business Etiquette

• Every workplace follows general rules of office etiquette and also their own unsaid rules of company etiquette. When rules of general office etiquette can be learned from reading, unsaid company etiquette is usually learned by observation. It may be a good idea to pay attention to how people in your company look, act and present themselves, and do the same.



Business Etiquette

- The ability to remember and use the names of people you are working with can serve as a great relationship tool. It develops trust and respect.
- Being on time is critical. It does not matter whether it's a meeting or a project deadline. Doing it on time shows reliability and "can-do" attitude.
- Sending "thank-you" notes to people can be a great tool to show other people that you respect them and appreciate their efforts. Handwritten notes are better that typed.



Business Etiquette

- Avoiding gossip and office politics can help to keep positive atmosphere in the workplace. Gossip and office politics distract from the work tasks you are responsible for and lowers the morale in your office.
- Controversial topics in a business environment (racial or ethnic jokes, personal affairs, age, weight, religion, personal finance, etc.) can make some people feel uncomfortable. Stick with topics about family, travel, movies, hobbies, sports, pets, etc.
- Interrupting people is usually considered rude, unless they are monopolizing a conversation. Use your good listening skills to show interest in other people.



Good Office Techniques

- Making sure your office and desk are nice and clean portrays you as a detail-oriented person.
- If someone stops by your office, stand up and extend your hand first. Make a friendly gesture and offer them a seat.
- Stopping by someone else's office unexpectedly can be taken by someone as a rude gesture. You might want to call first.



Good Phone Etiquette

- It's a good practice to return all business phone calls within 24 hours.
- Telling anybody that you will call them back, even if you are not planning to, can be interpreted as a rude and disrespectful gesture.
- Taking calls when someone is in your office might show that person that they are unimportant
- Avoid calling someone without a purpose. Getting to the point quickly shows the other person that you value their time.



Good E-mail Etiquette

- It is a good practice to start your e-mail with a friendly salutation. For example, "Dear Tom" or "Hi Tom" or just "Tom."
- Giving your e-mail a clear, concise and informative subject line, will increase the importance of your message and speed up the response.
- If you want someone to respond by a certain date, put it in your subject line after a clear description.
- It is considered good practice to respond to e-mail messages within 24 hours.



Good E-mail Etiquette

- Use "Out of the Office Assistant" every time you do not have access to e-mail.
- Spell checking your messages before sending, eliminates the number of spelling and grammar mistakes.
- Don't send anything by e-mail that you don't want to read in the Newspaper the next day.
- Using all CAPS in your message sounds like you are shouting.



Questions and Discussion



Thank You!

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