

Communication Skills: Lecture No.5

Module 3

Lecture 1

Non-Verbal Communication

Hello and welcome back to NPTEL's course on communication skills! We have a very interesting module at hand—*Non-verbal Communication*. Instead of beginning the lecture with the usual, introductory, conventional way of teaching, let me deliver this in the form of quizzes. Now you must be wondering as how you will be able to answer the quizzes even without knowing something about the subject. Don't worry! This is a just a preview quiz. By actively participating in it, you will get a rough idea of what's going to come. This task will also help in eliminating those incorrect information that you have gathered already on *body language*. Overall, it will help in clearing certain misconceptions you have about Non-Verbal Communication.

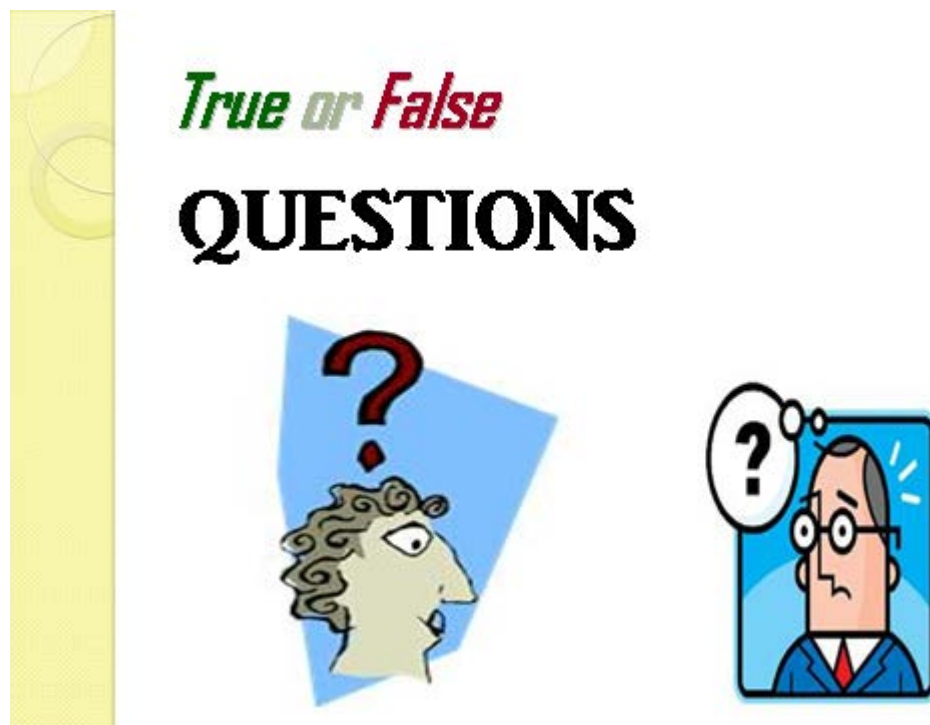
Objective



To Check your knowledge about body language

To clear certain misconceptions about non-verbal communication

There will be *two preview quizzes*; let's begin with the first one. In the previous modules and lectures, so far I have discussed communication in general and focused mostly on *Verbal Communication*. In this module, we are just going to shift our focus to Non-Verbal Communication. Get ready! Take a piece of paper. Note down your responses on the paper. You don't have to write long answers with any explanations. My future lectures are all going to give you all the needed explanations. So don't bother about explanation at this time just look at the questions and be natural.



There will be fifteen questions, I just want your honest and spontaneous response to these fifteen questions in the form of 'True' or 'False'; or just write T for true and F for false. At the end, I will tell you how to mark your score and I will also tell you something about your score as where you stand in terms of Non-Verbal Communication.

So we will start with the first one; remember you just have to write 'true' or 'false'.

1. Women have more natural sensitivity towards body language than men.



True or False

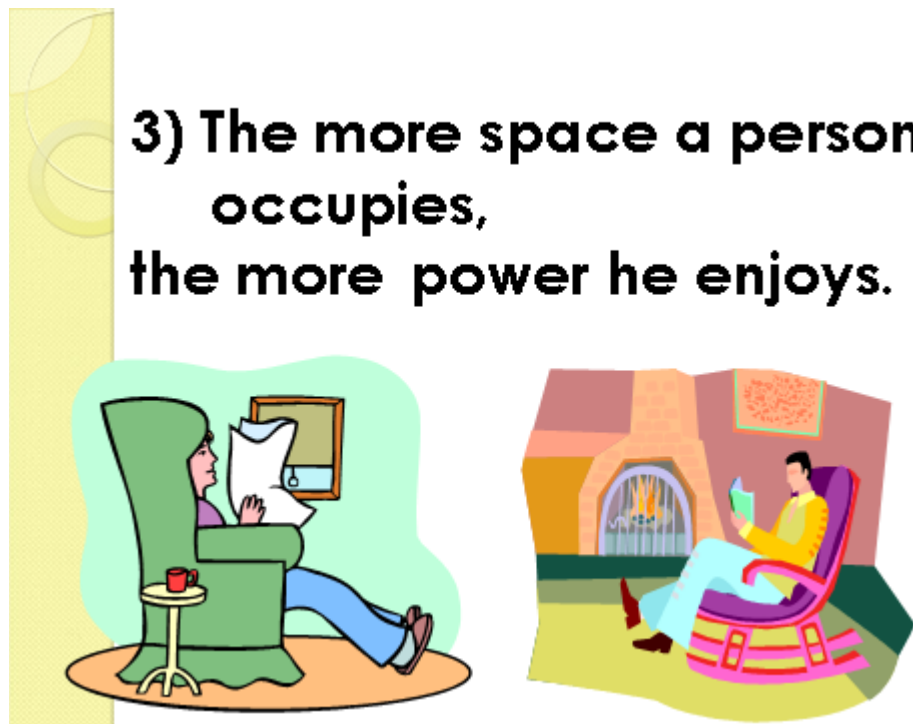
- 1) Women have natural sensitivity towards body language than men.

2. A dishonest person avoids eye contact.

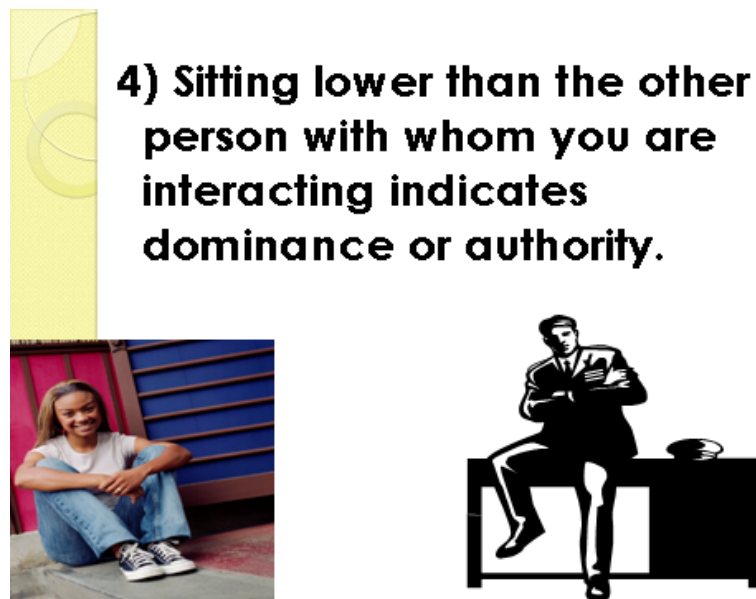
- 2) A dishonest person avoids eye contact.



3. More the space a person occupies more the power he/she enjoys.



4. Sitting lower than the person with whom you are interacting indicates dominance or authority.



5. It is a sign of aggressiveness when a person sits with his/her legs on a desk and hands clasped behind the head, especially before someone.

5) One shows traits of aggressiveness while sitting with his legs on a desk with his hands clasped behind his head, especially before someone.



6. Crossing the hands, legs or the ankles is a defensive gesture.

6) Crossing the hands, legs or the ankles is a defensive gesture.



- 7. Steepling with the fingers and hands shows confidence.**

7) Steepling with the fingers and hands show confidence.



- 8. Smoking a cigarette before an interview or other such activities is considered a sign of anxiety or nervousness.**

8) Smoking a cigarette, especially before an interview or such activity, is considered a sign of anxiety or nervousness.



9. Resting your head on the hand indicates interest in the subject.

9) Resting your head in the palm of your hand indicates interest in the subject.



10. Showing your thumbs up indicates a successfully completed job or victory.

10) Showing your thumbs up indicates a successfully completed job or victory.



11. Babies are more sensitive to body language than adults.

Babies . . .



11) Babies are more sensitive to body language than adults

12. Non-verbal communication is less intense and impactful than verbal communication.

Non-verbal communication

12) Non-verbal communication is less intense and impactful than verbal communication



13. When we stop talking to somebody, we stop the entire communication itself.

Verbal communication

13) When we stop talking to somebody verbally, we stop the entire communication itself.



INVOLUNTARY BODY LANGUAGE

14. Involuntary body language reveals a person's inner thinking or feelings.

Involuntary Body Language

14) Involuntary body language reveals a person's inner thinking or feelings.



TIME PERCEPTION

15. People maintain their appointments and meet deadlines according to their perceptions of time.

Time Perception

15) People maintain their appointments and meet deadlines according to their perceptions of time.



Answers:

ANSWERS



Give one mark to the right answer and zero to the wrong answer:

1) Women have more natural sensitivity towards body language than men. True.

Yes, of course, women have an instinctual and spontaneous way of gathering significant information from non-verbal cues from the people with whom they interacting with. So, they intuitively grasp body signals much faster than men and learn quickly whether somebody is beneficial or harmful, whether they can trust somebody or not. They are more perceptive and use different kind of signals than men; so this is true.

2) A dishonest person avoids eye contact. True.

Eye contact, as I have been telling you in the other lectures, is a very integral part in terms of personal as well as professional communication. If somebody is trying to avoid eye contact it actually means the person is not very sincere and honest in the communication that he is building up. Mostly a cheater tries to avoid eye contact. Small kids, while telling a lie, look down at the floor or look up but avoid meeting the eyes directly.

3) The more space a person occupies the more power he enjoys. True.

If you look at the modes of transport, train, for instance; the first AC compartment gives more space than the second AC and the third AC compartments. Comparatively, AC compartments offer more space to the passengers than the sleeper and unreserved ones. So more the power you have and more the money you can afford to spend, more will be the space you get. Thus, in the office environment, the boss occupies the maximum space, the next subordinate gets relatively lesser space, and then the lowest level workers sit in cramped cubicles. So, space indicates power equation. The statement is true; give one full credit to you if you answered it as 'true'!

4) Sitting lower than the other person with whom you are interacting indicates dominance or authority. False

Even if you look at the given picture, you will understand that it's false. Now look at the girl, she is sitting down and looks humble but in no way indicates authority. But somebody who is sitting on the table can indicate authority; especially if you are compelled to sit down for some reason. So, higher a person locates himself/herself and lower the position he/she delegates to the others, he/she expresses the level of dominance. Usually, the one on the higher level is

obviously the higher authority and the one on the lower, is the subordinate. Non-verbally, the higher position indicates authority, and the dominance that a person asserts.

- 5) One shows traits of aggressiveness while sitting with his legs on a desk with his hands clasped behind his head, especially before someone. True.**

Again the answer is obviously true. The posture indicates that he/she is aggressive, rude, and impolite. The possible exception is when the person is sitting alone, relaxing and reading something or has some kind of back pain and he/she wants to relax in that way. Sometimes the boss may do this deliberately to show that he/she is much more dominant and aggressive than the other person. You can use this as an aggressive technique to make your partner obey some of your orders!

- 6) Crossing the hands, legs or the ankles is a defensive gesture. True.**

Any kind of crossed hand/leg gestures, whether it is clasping your fingers or crossing your hands or crossing it either way or hiding the hands behind or crossed legs indicate defensiveness. Conversely, open palms indicate openness in terms of body language.

- 7) Steepling with the fingers and hands show confidence. True.**

Even from the picture we can see that the person exudes lot of confidence. As against this gesture, one who lacks in confidence will try to clasp the finger, pinch the hand or frenetically play with something.

- 8) Smoking a cigarette, now some people think that it's just showing an attitude especially before an interview or such an activity is considered a sign of anxiety or nervousness. True.**

Especially before an interview, activities such as smoking cigarettes and chewing gum are considered symptoms of anxiety or nervousness.

- 9) Resting your head on you're the hand indicates interest in the subject. False**

When you are bored, you naturally try to put the head on your palm. You act similarly when you feel sleepy.

- 10) Showing your thumbs up indicates a successfully completed job or interview. True.**

When we accomplish something successfully, we show the thumbs up. Generally, it is used to indicate that you have emerged victoriously. It is a universal gesture that symbolizes success.

11) Babies are more sensitive to body language than adults. True.

Babies actually start communicating non-verbally (even before communicating verbally) by their cries, smile, laughter, etc. through touch a baby recognizes its mother, father, a friendly person, a trustworthy person, an enemy, and so on. So, babies are more sensitive to body language than adults.

12) Non-verbal communication is less intense and impactful than verbal communication. False

A smile can indicate satisfaction, contentment, happiness, wonder, etc. Therefore, non-verbal signals convey more than words and they will have deeper impact than verbal communication.

13) When we stop talking to somebody verbally, we stop the entire communication itself. False

When we stop talking to somebody verbally, we do not stop the entire communication; we actually start communicating with the person non-verbally. When room partners stop talking, they communicate more effectively by banging the door, playing songs in high volume, avoiding eye contact, etc.

14) Involuntary body language reveals a person's inner thinking or feelings. True.

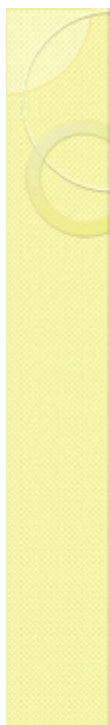
Involuntary body language like clasp/pinching your hand and slouching while walking reveal inner nervous thinking.

15) People maintain their appointments and meet deadlines according to their perceptions of time. True.

People either operate with monochromatic or polychromatic aspect of time. While a monochromatic is rigid and tight about his/her schedule, a polychromatic person is flexible and

open to multitasking. A polychromatic person doesn't bother about following the deadline or concerned about meeting somebody in time and vice versa.

YOUR SCORE ANALYSIS:



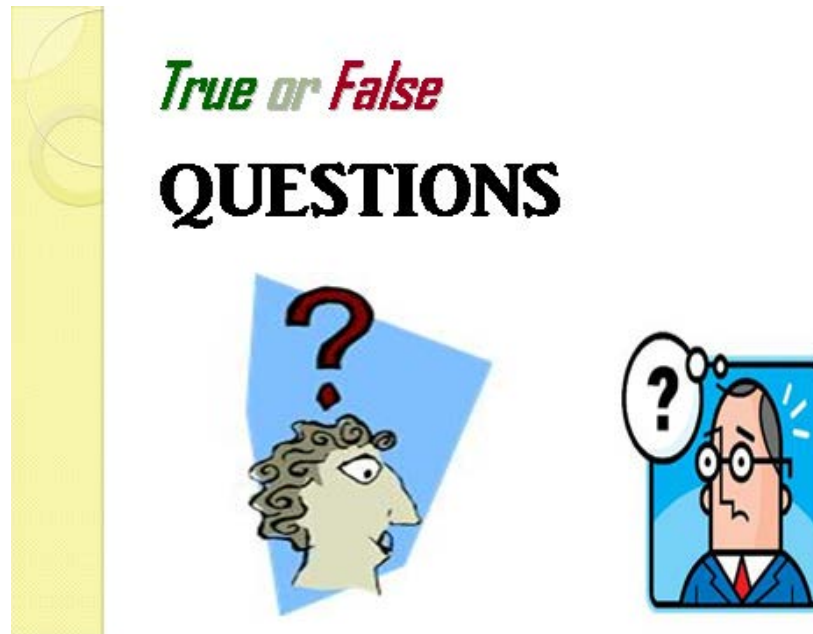
Your Score Analysis

- **13-15: Outstanding**
- **10-12: Very Good**
- **7-9: Good**
- **4-6: Average**
- **2-4: Below Average**
- **0-2: Poor**

Tip: Whatever the score you have got, there is always room for improvement!

Now, let's move on to *preview quiz 2*.

As in the previous quiz, for each correct answer you get one mark, and for each wrong answer you get zero.



1. Silence can be used as a powerful means of dominance.



2. Non- verbal communication can contradict verbal meaning.

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3. Non-verbal communication can be used as a substitute for verbal communication.

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4. Some non-verbal signs are universal and commonly acceptable.

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5. Gestures, which indicate similar verbal meaning, can differ non-verbally according to their cultural background.

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6. The face is the most powerful channel of non-verbal communication.

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7. We move away from persons we dislike.

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8. Negative non-verbal signals are more noticeable than the positive ones.

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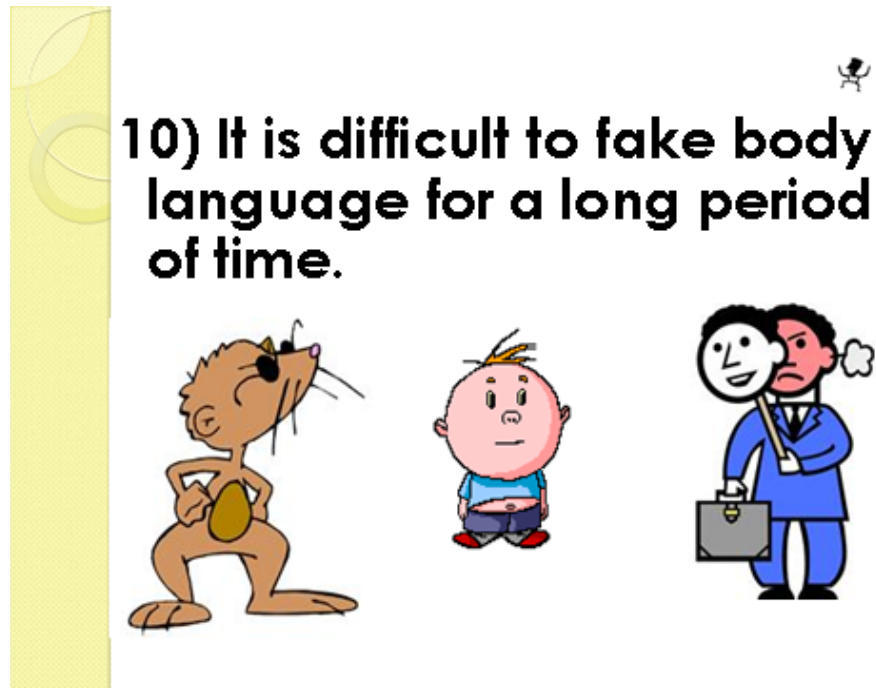


9. Awareness of your body language can help you control it.

9) Awareness of your body language can help you control it.



10. It is difficult to fake body language for a long period of time.



Answers:



1. Silence can be used as a powerful means of dominance. True.

Observe the situation between school going kids; if one is hurt, immediately the kid remains silent until the other one apologizes. Silence is used as a tool of dominance between husband and wife. The person who thinks that the other person should submit, maintains silence till the other person relents.

2. Non- verbal communication can contradict verbal meaning. True.

Fake verbal praises, promises and assurances can be easily detected if the body language is perceived carefully. Genuine smile emanates from the eyes, not from the lips!

3. Non-verbal communication can be used as a substitute for verbal communication. True.

Suppose a nurse wants to tell some noisy children to remain quiet, she has to just put her forefinger over her lips (indicating they should stop talking). She need not utter a word, but with a non-verbal gesture she can control the children.



4. Some non-verbal signs are universal and commonly acceptable. True.

The expressions of sorrow and joy are commonly acceptable and people universally express such emotions in the same manner.

- 5. Gestures, which indicate similar verbal meaning, can differ non-verbally according to their cultural background. True.**

For instance, respect can be expressed by different gestures in different cultures—touching feet, shaking hands, bowing, hugging, etc.

- 6. The face is the most powerful channel of non-verbal communication. True.**

The face has eyes and lips. Maintaining eye contact or not maintaining it gives you the maximum clue as whether one is interested in the subject or not. Similarly, various lip movements indicate joy, sorrow, discomfort, etc.

- 7. We move away from persons we dislike. True.**

If it's a close friend, we feel like putting the hand on the shoulder, we hold hand, we touch and by touching we reduce lot of space. If we don't like somebody, then, we maintain distance or we move away from the person. We do it with strangers with whom we feel threatened. By moving away, we create space and distance that gives a sense of safety to ourselves.

- 8. Negative non-verbal signals are more noticeable than the positive ones. True.**

Anger and disappointment, for instance, are easily noticeable because they are difficult to control non-verbally.

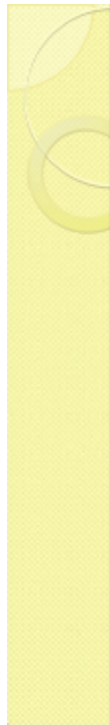
- 9. Awareness of your body language can help you control it. True.**

Especially awareness of your negative body language can help you exercise some control over the negative gestures.

- 10. It is difficult to fake body language for a long period of time. True.**

You can fake it for a short period of time but for a long period of time it's not possible.

YOUR SCORE ANALYSIS:



Your Score Analysis

- **9-10: Outstanding**
- **8-9: Very Good**
- **6-7: Good**
- **5-6: Average**
- **3-4: Below Average**
- **0-2: Poor**

Tip: Based on the inputs you have received so far, start making your non-verbal perception sharper by observing yourself and others.

