



Interpersonal Communication, Session 08-09

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

- **The Channels of Nonverbal Communication**

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NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

- **Nonverbal communication** is communication without words. You communicate nonverbally when you gesture, smile or frown, widen your eyes, move your chair closer to someone, wear jewelry, touch someone, or raise your vocal volume—*and when* someone receives these signals.
- **Nonverbal messages** may communicate specific meanings, just as verbal messages do; they may also metacommunicate, or communicate about other messages.

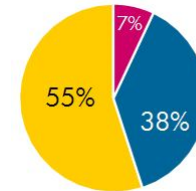


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To Communicate Meaning

- **Nonverbal messages** may communicate the exact same meanings as verbal messages. The same purposes that were identified for communication in general are served by nonverbal signals as well.
- **First**, nonverbal messages help us *to discover*—to learn, to acquire information about the world and about other people.
- **Nonverbal messages**—the smile, the focused eye contact, the leaning forward, and of course the kiss—also help us *to establish and maintain relationships*.
- **We signal that we like another person** first through nonverbal signals; then, usually at least, we follow up with verbal messages. At the same time, of course, our nonverbal messages can help destroy and dissolve interpersonal relationships.
- **We can also use nonverbal messages to help.** Gently touching an ill person's face, hugging someone who's in pain, or helping an old person walk are common examples.

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Elements of Personal Communication

- 7% spoken words
- 38% voice, tone
- 55% body language

- **We use nonverbal messages to persuade;** *for example*, when your posture and clothing communicate your self-confidence, when your steady gaze communicates conviction that you're right, or when your facial expression communicates that the advertised product tastes great.
- **Nonverbal messages may also** be used *to play*. Tickling or playing patty-cake with a young child, making funny faces, and drawing cartoons are simple examples.

To Metacommunicate

- **Six general ways** in which nonverbal communication blends with verbal communication have been identified and will illustrate the wide variety of metacommunication functions that nonverbal messages may serve (Knapp & Hall, 1997).

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- **Nonverbal messages** are often used to *accent* or emphasize some part of the verbal message. You might, for example, raise your voice to underscore a particular word or phrase, bang your fist on the desk to stress your commitment, or look longingly into someone's eyes when saying "I love you."
- **We use nonverbal communication** to *complement*, to add nuances of meaning not communicated by your verbal message.
- **We may deliberately *contradict* our verbal messages** with nonverbal movements—for example, by crossing your fingers or winking to indicate that you're lying.
- **Movements may be used to *regulate* or *control*** the flow of verbal messages, as when we purse our lips, lean forward, or make hand gestures to indicate that we want to speak.
- **We can *repeat* or *restate* the verbal message nonverbally.**
- **We may also use nonverbal communication to *substitute for* or *take the place of* verbal messages.**

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THE CHANNELS OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

- **Nonverbal communication** is probably most easily explained in terms of the various channels through which messages pass.
- **Here we'll survey 10 channels:** body, face, eye, space, artifactual, touch, paralanguage, silence, time, and smell.

The Body

- **Two areas of the body** are especially important in communicating messages. **First**, the movements we make with our body communicate; **second**, the general appearance of our body communicates.

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Body Movements

- **Researchers in kinesics**, or the study of nonverbal comm. through face and body movements, identify five major types of movements: emblems, illustrators, affect displays, regulators, and adaptors (Ekman & Friesen, 1969; Knapp & Hall, 1997).
- **Here are a few cultural differences** in the emblems we may commonly use (Axtell, 1993):
 - **In the United States**, to say “hello” you wave with your whole hand moving from side to side, but in a large part of Europe that same signal means “no.” In Greece such a gesture would be considered insulting.
 - **The V for victory** is common throughout much of the world; but if you make this gesture in England with the palm facing your face, it’s as insulting as the raised middle finger is in the United States.
 - **In Texas the raised fist** with little finger and index finger held upright is a positive expression of support, because it represents the Texas longhorn steer. But in Italy it’s an insult that means

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“Your spouse is having an affair with someone else.” In parts of South America it’s a gesture to ward off evil, and in parts of Africa it’s a curse: “May you experience bad times.”

- **In the United States and in much of Asia**, hugs are rarely exchanged among acquaintances; but among Latins and southern Europeans, hugging is a common greeting gesture, and failing to hug someone may communicate unfriendliness.
- **Illustrators** enhance the verbal messages they accompany. For example, when referring to something to the left, we might gesture toward the left. Most often we illustrate with your hands, but we can also illustrate with head and general body movements. We might, for example, turn your head or our entire body toward the left. We might also use illustrators to communicate the shape or size of objects we’re talking about.



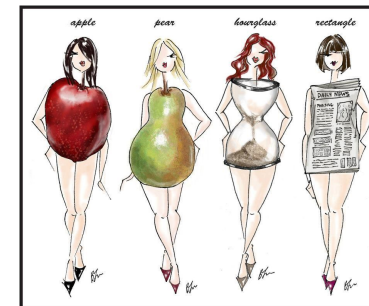
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- **Affect displays are movements** of the face (smiling or frowning, for example) but also of the hands and general body (body tension or relaxation, for example) that communicate emotional meaning. Affect displays are often unconscious; you smile or frown, for example, without awareness. At other times, however, you may smile consciously, trying to convey your pleasure or satisfaction.
- **Regulators are behaviors** that monitor, control, coordinate, or maintain the speaking of another individual.
- **Adaptors are gestures that satisfy** some personal need, such as scratching to relieve an itch or moving your hair out of your eyes.
 - **Self-adaptors** are selftouching movements (for example, rubbing your nose).
 - **Alter-adaptors** are movements directed at the person with whom you're speaking, such as removing lint from someone's jacket or straightening a person's tie or folding your arms in front of you to keep others a comfortable distance from you.

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Body Appearance

- **Our general body appearance** also communicates. Height, for example, has been shown to be significant in a wide variety of situations (Keyes, 1980; Guerrero, DeVito, & Hecht, 1999; Knapp & Hall, 1997).
- **Our body also reveals our race** (through skin color and tone) and may also give clues as to our more specific nationality. Our weight in proportion to your height will also communicate messages to others, as will the length, color, and style of our hair.
- **Our general attractiveness** is also a part of body communication. Attractive people have the advantage in just about every activity you can name.



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Facial Communication

- **Throughout your interactions**, your face communicates various messages, especially your emotions.
- **Facial movements** alone seem to communicate the degree of pleasantness, agreement, and sympathy felt; the rest of the body doesn't provide any additional information.
- **But for other emotional** messages—for example, the intensity with which an emotion is felt—both facial and bodily cues are used (Graham, Bitti, & Argyle, 1975; Graham & Argyle, 1975).
- **So important are these cues** in communicating your full meaning that graphic representations are now commonly used in Internet communication. In graphic user interface chat groups, buttons are available to help you encode your emotions graphically.
- **Table 8.1 identifies** some of the more common “emoticons,” icons that communicate emotions.

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Emoticon	Meaning	Emoticon	Meaning
:~)	Smile; I'm kidding	*This is important*	Substitutes for underlining or italics
:-(Frown; I'm feeling down	<G>	Grin; I'm kidding
*	Kiss	<grin>	Grin; I'm kidding
{}	Hug	^.^	Woman's smile
{*****}	Hugs and kisses	^_^	Man's smile
This is important	Gives emphasis, calls special attention to	^ o ^	Happy

- **The facial movements** may express at least the following eight emotions: happiness, surprise, fear, anger, sadness, disgust, contempt, and interest (Ekman, Friesen, & Ellsworth, 1972).
- **Facial expressions of these emotions** are generally called primary affect displays: They indicate relatively pure, single emotions. Other emotional states and other facial displays are combinations of these various primary emotions and are called affect blends.

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Facial Management Techniques

- **As you grew up, we learned** your culture's nonverbal system of communication. We also learned certain facial management techniques; for example, to hide certain emotions and to emphasize others. Here are four facial management techniques that you will quickly recognize (Malandro, Barker, & Barker, 1989):
 - **Intensifying helps** you to exaggerate a feeling.
 - **Deintensifying helps** you to underplay a feeling; for example, to cover up your own joy in the presence of a friend who didn't receive such good news.
 - **Neutralizing helps** you to hide feelings; for example, to cover up your sadness so as not to depress others.
 - **Masking helps** you to replace or substitute the expression of one emotion for the emotion you're really feeling; for example, to express happiness in order to cover up your disappointment about not receiving the gift you had expected.

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Encoding–Decoding Accuracy

- **One popular question** concerns the accuracy with which people can encode and decode emotions through facial expressions.
- **Research in 11 different countries** shows that women are better than men at both encoding and decoding nonverbal cues (Rosenthal & DePaulo, 1979).
- **It may be argued** that because men and women play different roles in society, they've learned different adaptive techniques and skills to help them perform these roles. Thus, in most societies women are expected to be more friendly, nurturing, and supportive and so learn these skills (Eagly & Crowley, 1986).
- **Accuracy also varies** with the emotions themselves. Some emotions are easier to encode and decode than others. In one study, for example, people judged facial expressions of happiness with an accuracy ranging from 55 to 100 percent, surprise from 38 to 86 percent, and sadness from 19 to 88 percent (Ekman, Friesen, & Ellsworth, 1972).

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Eye Communication

- **Research on the messages** communicated by the eyes (a study known technically as oculusis) shows that these messages vary depending on the duration, direction, and quality of the eye behavior.
- **The average length of mutual gaze** (two persons gazing at each other) is 1.18 seconds (Argyle & Ingham, 1972; Argyle, 1988). When eye contact falls short of this amount, you may think the person is uninterested, shy, or preoccupied.
- **The direction of the eye** also communicates. In much of the United States, you're expected to glance alternately at the other person's face, then away, then again at the face, and so on.
- **The rule for the public speaker** is to scan the entire audience, not focusing for too long on or ignoring any one area of the audience. When you break these directional rules, you communicate different meanings—abnormally high or low interest, self-consciousness, nervousness over the interaction, and so on.

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The Functions of Eye Contact and Eye Avoidance

- **Eye contact can serve** a variety of functions. One such function is to seek feedback.
- **A second function is to inform** the other person that the channel of communication is open and that he or she should now speak.
- **Eye movements may also signal** the nature of a relationship, whether positive (an attentive glance) or negative (eye avoidance). You can also signal your power through visual dominance behavior (Exline, Ellyson, & Long, 1975).
- **Eye avoidance can also serve** several different functions. When you avoid eye contact or avert your glance, you may help others maintain their privacy.
- **Eye avoidance can also** signal lack of interest—in a person, a conversation, or some visual stimulus. At times, too, you may hide your eyes to block out unpleasant stimuli

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Pupil Dilation

- **In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries**, Italian women put drops of belladonna (which literally means “beautiful woman”) into their eyes to enlarge the pupils so that they would look more attractive.
- **Contemporary pupillometrics** research supports the intuitive logic of these women; dilated pupils are judged more attractive than constricted ones (Hess, 1975; Marshall, 1983).
- **Pupil size also reveals your interest** and level of emotional arousal. Your pupils enlarge when you’re interested in something or when you are emotionally aroused.
- **When homosexuals** and heterosexuals were shown pictures of nude bodies, the homosexuals’ pupils dilated more when they viewed same-sex bodies, whereas the heterosexuals’ pupils dilated more when they viewed opposite-sex bodies (Hess, Seltzer, & Schlien, 1965).

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Space Communication

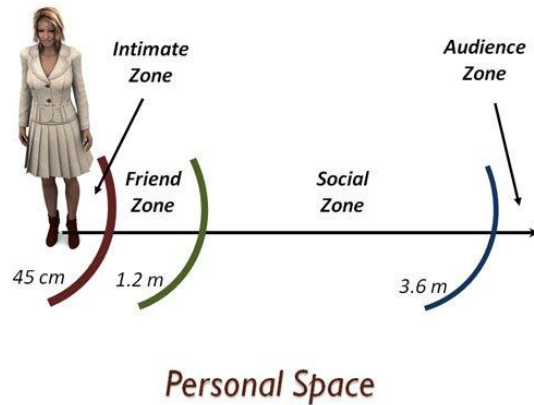
- **Our use of space to communicate**—an area of study known technically as proxemics—speaks as surely and as loudly as words and sentences.

Spatial Distances

- **Edward Hall** (1959, 1963, 1976) distinguishes four proxemic distances: types of spatial distances that define the types of relationships between people and the types of communication in which they’re likely to engage.
- **In intimatedistance**, ranging from actual touching to 18 inches, the presence of the other individual is unmistakable. Each person experiences the sound, smell, and feel of the other’s breath. You use intimate distance for lovemaking, comforting, and protecting. This distance is so short that most people don’t consider it proper in public.

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- **Personal distance refers** to the protective “bubble” that defines your personal space, ranging from 18 inches to 4 feet. This imaginary bubble keeps you protected and untouched by others.
- **At social distance**, ranging from 4 to 12 feet, you lose the visual detail you have at personal distance. You conduct impersonal business and interact at a social gathering at this social distance.
- **Public distance**, from 12 to more than 25 feet, protects you. At this distance you could take defensive action if threatened.



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Influences on Space Communication

- **Several factors influence** the way you relate to and use space in communicating. Here are a few examples of how status, culture, subject matter, gender, and age influence space communication (Burgoon, Buller, & Woodall, 1996).
- **People of equal status maintain shorter distances** between themselves than do people of unequal status. When status is unequal, the higher-status person may approach the lower-status person more closely than the lower-status person would approach the higher-status person.
- **Members of different cultures treat space differently.**
- **When discussing personal subjects you maintain shorter distances** than with impersonal subjects.
- **Your gender also influences your spatial relationships.** Women generally stand closer to each other than men do.

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Territoriality

- **One of the most interesting concepts** in ethology (the study of animals in their natural surroundings) is territoriality, a possessive or ownership reaction to an area of space or to particular objects. Two interesting dimensions of territoriality are territorial types and territorial markers.

Territory Types

- **Three types of territory** are primary, secondary, and public (Altman, 1975).
 - **Primary territories** are your exclusive preserve: your desk, room, house, or backyard, for example. In these areas you're in control.
 - **Secondary territories**, although they don't belong to you, are associated with you—perhaps because you've occupied them for a long time or they were assigned to you.

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- **Public territories are areas** that are open to all people, such as a park, movie house, restaurant, or beach. European cafés, food courts in suburban malls, and the open areas in large city office buildings are public spaces that bring people together and stimulate communication.

- **The electronic revolution**, however, may well change the role of public space in stimulating communication (Drucker & Gumpert, 1991; Gumpert & Drucker, 1995).

- **Territoriality is closely** linked to status. Generally, the size and location of your territories signal your status within your social group.
- **The size and location of human** territories also say something about status (Mehrabian, 1976; Sommer, 1969).



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Territorial Markers

- **Much as animals mark their territory**, humans mark theirs with three types of markers: central markers, boundary markers, and earmarkers (Hickson & Stacks, 1993).
- **Central markers are items you place** in a territory to reserve it. For example, you place a drink at the bar, books on your desk, or a sweater over the chair to let others know that these territories belong to you.
- **Boundary markers set boundaries** that divide your territory from “theirs.” In the supermarket checkout line, the bar placed between your groceries and those of the person behind you is a boundary marker.
- **Earmarkers—a term taken** from the practice of branding animals on their ears—are those identifying marks that indicate your possession of a territory or object. Trademarks, nameplates, and initials on a shirt or attaché case are all examples of earmarkers.

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Artifactual Communication

- **Artifactual communication** is communication via objects made by human hands. Thus, color, clothing, jewelry, and the decoration of space would be considered artifactual.

Color Communication

- **There is some evidence** that colors affect us physiologically. For example, respiratory movements increase with red light and decrease with blue light. Similarly, eye blinks increase in frequency when eyes are exposed to red light and decrease when exposed to blue.
- **When a school changed** the color of its walls from orange and white to blue, the blood pressure of the students decreased and their academic performance increased (Ketcham, 1958; Malandro, Barker, & Barker, 1989).

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- **Color communication also influences** perceptions and behaviors (Kanner, 1989). People's acceptance of a product, for example, is largely determined by its packaging, especially its color.
- **Black is so powerful** it could work against the lawyer with the jury. Brown lacks sufficient authority. Green would probably elicit a negative response.

Clothing and Body Adornment

- **People make inferences about** who you are, at least in part, from the way you dress. Whether these inferences are accurate or not, they will influence what people think of you and how they react to you.
- **Your socioeconomic class**, your seriousness, your attitudes (for example, whether you're conservative or liberal), your concern for convention, your sense of style, and perhaps even your creativity will all be judged in part by the way you dress (Molloy, 1975, 1977, 1981; Burgoon, Buller, & Woodall, 1996; Knapp & Hall, 1997).

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- **Similarly, college students** will perceive an instructor dressed informally as friendly, fair, enthusiastic, and flexible; they will see the same instructor dressed formally as prepared, knowledgeable, and organized (Malandro, Barker, & Barker, 1989).
- **The way you wear your hair says** something about your attitudes. Men with long hair will generally be judged as less conservative than those with shorter hair.
- **Your jewelry also communicates** about you. Wedding and engagement rings are obvious examples that communicate specific messages.

Space Decoration

- **The way you decorate your private** spaces also communicates about you. The office with a mahogany desk and bookcases and oriental rugs communicates your importance and status within an organization

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- **The expensiveness of the furnishings** may communicate your status and wealth; their coordination may convey your sense of style.
- **The magazines may reflect** your interests, and the arrangement of chairs around a television set may reveal how important watching television is to you.
- **The contents of bookcases** lining the walls reveal the importance of reading in your life.



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Touch Communication

- **The study of touch communication**, technically referred to as haptics, suggests that touch is perhaps the most primitive form of communication (Montagu, 1971).

The Meanings of Touch

- **Touch communicates a wide variety** of messages (Jones & Yarbrough, 1985). Here are five major ones that will illustrate this great variety.
 - **Touch communicates positive** feelings; for example, support, appreciation, inclusion, sexual interest or intent, composure, immediacy, affection, trust, similarity and quality, and informality (Jones & Yarbrough, 1985; Burgoon, 1991). Touch also stimulates self-disclosure (Rabinowitz, 1991).
 - **Touch often communicates** your intention to play, either affectionately or aggressively.

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- **Touch may control** the behaviors, attitudes, or feelings of the other person. To obtain compliance, for example, you touch the other person to communicate “move over,” “hurry,” “stay here,” or “do it.” You might also touch a person to gain his or her attention, as if to say “look at me” or “look over here.” In some situations touching can even amount to a kind of **nonverbal dominance behavior**.
- **Ritualistic touching centers** on greetings and departures; examples are shaking hands to say “hello” or “good-bye,” hugging, kissing, or putting your arm around another’s shoulder when greeting or saying farewell.
- **Task-related touching** is associated with the performance of some function, as when you remove a speck of dust from another person’s coat, help someone out of a car, or check someone’s forehead for fever.

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Touch Avoidance

- **Much as you have a need and desire** to touch and be touched, you also have a tendency to avoid touch from certain people or in certain circumstances (Andersen & Leibowitz, 1978).
- **Touch avoidance is positively** related to communication apprehension. If you have a strong fear of oral communication, then you probably also have strong touch avoidance tendencies. Touch avoidance is also high in those who self-disclose less.
- **Both touch and self-disclosure** are intimate forms of comm. People who are reluctant to get close to another person by self-disclosing also seem reluctant to get close by touching.



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Paralanguage: The Vocal Channel

- **Paralanguage is the vocal** but nonverbal dimension of speech. It has to do not with what you say but with how you say it. A traditional exercise students use to increase their ability to express different emotions, feelings, and attitudes is to repeat a sentence while accenting or stressing different words.
- **Significant differences** in meaning are easily communicated depending on where the speaker places the stress.
- **The sentences is stress**, one aspect of paralanguage. In addition to stress and **pitch** (**highness** or lowness), paralanguage includes such **voice qualities as rate (speed), volume (loudness), and** rhythm as well as the vocalizations you make in crying, whispering, moaning, belching, yawning, and yelling (Trager, 1958, 1961; Argyle, 1988).

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Judgments about People

- **Paralanguage cues are** often used as a basis for judgments about people; for example, evaluations of their emotional state or even their personality.
- **A listener can accurately** judge the emotional state of a speaker from vocal expression alone, if both speaker and listener speak the same language. **Paralanguage cues are not** so accurate when used to communicate emotions to those who speak a different language (Albas, McCluskey, & Albas, 1976).

Judgments about Communication Effectiveness

- **In one-way communication** (when one person is doing all or most of the speaking and the other person is doing all or most of the listening), those who talk fast (about 50 percent faster than normal) are more persuasive (MacLachlan, 1979).
- **People agree more** with a fast speaker than with a slow speaker and find the fast speaker more intelligent and objective.

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Silence

- **Like words and gestures, silence, too, communicates** important meanings and serves important functions (Johannesen, 1974; Jaworski, 1993).
- **Silence allows the speaker** *time to think, time to formulate* and organize his or her verbal communications. Before messages of intense conflict, as well as before those confessing undying love, there's often silence.
- **Again, silence seems to prepare** the receiver for the importance of these future messages.
- **After a conflict,** for example, one or both individuals may remain silent as a kind of punishment.
- **Sometimes silence is used** *as a response to personal anxiety, shyness, or threats. You may feel anxious or shy* among new people and prefer to remain silent.
- **Silence may be used** *to prevent communication of certain messages.*

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- **Like the eyes, face, and hands,** silence can also be used to *communicate emotional responses* (Ehrenhaus, 1988).
- **Silence is often used to communicate** annoyance, particularly when accompanied by a pouting expression, arms crossed in front of the chest, and nostrils flared.
- **Of course, you may also use silence** when you simply have *nothing to say, when nothing occurs to you,* or when you don't want to say anything.



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Time Communication

- **The study of temporal communication**, known technically as chronemics, concerns the use of time—how you organize it, react to it, and communicate messages through it (Bruneau, 1985, 1990). Your psychological time orientation; the emphasis you place on the past, present, and future.
- **In a past orientation**, you have special reverence for the past. You relive old times and regard old methods as the best. You see events as circular and recurring, so the wisdom of yesterday is applicable also to today and tomorrow.
- **In a present orientation**, however, you live in the present: for now, not tomorrow. In a future orientation, you look toward and live for the future. You save today, work hard in college, and deny yourself luxuries because you're preparing for the future.
- **The time orientation** you develop depends to a great extent on your socioeconomic class and your personal experiences. Gonzalez and Zimbardo (1985)

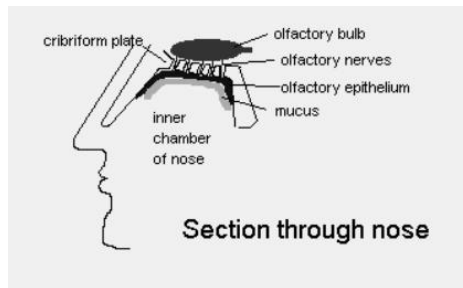
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Smell Communication

- **Smell (olfactory) communication** is extremely important in a wide variety of situations and is now big business (Kleinfeld, 1992).
- **There's some evidence** (though clearly not very conclusive evidence) that the smell of lemon contributes to a perception of health, the smells of lavender and eucalyptus increase alertness, and the smell of rose oil reduces blood pressure.
- **Findings such as these** have contributed to the growth of aromatherapy and to a new profession of aromatherapists (Furlow, 1996).
- **Here are some of the most important** messages scent seems to communicate.
 - **Attraction messages.** Humans use *perfumes, colognes, after-shave lotions, powders,* and the like to enhance their attractiveness to others and to themselves. After all, you also smell yourself. When the smells are pleasant, you feel better about yourself.

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- **Taste messages.** *Without smell, taste would be severely impaired. For example, without smell it would be extremely difficult to taste the difference between a raw potato and an apple. Street vendors selling hot dogs, sausages, and similar foods are aided greatly by the smells, which stimulate the appetites of passersby.*
- **Memory messages.** *Smell is a powerful memory aid; you often recall situations from months and even years ago when you encounter a similar smell.*
- **Identification messages.** *Smell is often used to create an image or an identity for a product. Advertisers and manufacturers spend millions of dollars each year creating scents for cleaning products and toothpastes.*



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