

Course03

Nonverbal communication means conveying information without using words.

This might involve using certain facial expressions or hand gestures to make a specific point, or it could involve the use (or non-use) of eye contact, physical proximity, and other nonverbal cues to get a message across.

A substantial portion of our [communication](#) is nonverbal. In fact, some researchers suggest that the percentage of nonverbal communication is four times that of verbal communication, with 80% of what we communicate involving our actions and gestures versus only 20% being conveyed with the use of words.

Types of Nonverbal Communication

While these signals can be so subtle that we are not consciously aware of them, research has identified eight types of nonverbal communication. These nonverbal communication types are:

1. Facial expressions
2. Gestures
3. Paralinguistics (such as loudness or tone of voice)
4. Body language
5. Proxemics or personal space
6. Eye gaze, haptics (touch)
7. Appearance
8. Artifacts (objects and images)

Why Nonverbal Communication Is Important

Nonverbal communication serves an important role in conveying meaning. Some benefits it provides include:

- **Strengthening relationships:** Nonverbal communication fosters closeness and intimacy in interpersonal relationships.
- **Substituting for spoken words:** Signaling information that a person might not be able to say aloud. This can be helpful in situations where a person might not be heard (such as a noisy workplace) or in therapy situations where a mental health professional can look at nonverbal behaviors to learn more about how a client might be feeling.
- **Reinforcing meaning:** Matching nonverbal communication to spoken words can help add clarity and reinforce important points.
- **Regulating conversation:** Nonverbal signals can also help regulate the flow of conversation and indicate both the start and end of a message or topic.

Nonverbal communication is important because it can provide valuable information, reinforce the meaning of spoken words, help convey trust, and add clarity to your message.