

Chapter 8: Nonverbal Influence

Key Terms and Concepts

nonverbal behavior	proxemics
Impression Management Theory (Box 8.1)	geographical distance
Direct Effects Model of Immediacy	personal space
immediacy	Expectancy Violations Theory
kinesics	chronemics
eye contact	scarcity
facial expressions	psychological reactance
mirroring	artifacts
body language	physical appearance; body, face, hair, height
emblems	halo effect
illustrators	endomorph, ectomorph, mesomorph
adaptors and self-touches	match-up hypothesis
haptics	paralinguistics and vocalics
high in the need for touch (Box 8.3)	speech rate

Chapter Summary

I. Nonverbal behavior plays an important role in the process of social influence.

- 1) Nonverbal behavior assists in impression management.
 - a. Impression management theory (Box 8.1) suggests that people control their behaviors, particularly nonverbal behaviors, in order to create a good impression.
 - b. Political debates illustrate the ways in which individuals can strategically attempt to control others' impressions through their own nonverbal behaviors.
- 2) Nonverbal behavior helps establish intimate relationships.
- 3) Nonverbal behavior can heighten or distract attention from persuasive messages.
- 4) Nonverbal behavior reinforces behavioral compliance.
- 5) Nonverbal behavior can signal expectations of behavior.

II. The Direct Effects Model of Immediacy argues that there is a direct, positive relationship between persuasion and immediacy (i.e., the enactment of behavior communicating warmth and involvement leads to more influence).

III. Several types of nonverbal behavior are related to social influence:

A. Kinesics refers to the study of eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, and body movements and posture.

- 1) Although eye contact may make a person more persuasive by increasing perceptions of sincerity, its effectiveness may depend on a number of factors (e.g., the legitimacy of the request that is made).
- 2) Facial expressions that make a person seem sociable and relaxed, and that "mirror" the persuadee's expressions, tend to increase the influence seeker's persuasiveness.
 - a. Yet, in contexts where a dominant demeanor would be most persuasive, positive and likeable facial expressions could be counterproductive.

- 3) The persuasive effect of gestures depends on the type of gesture being used.
 - a. Emblems increase attention and retention of a persuasive message.
 - b. Illustrators, especially if rhythmic and forceful, increase persuasion.
 - c. Self-touching gestures decrease a person's persuasiveness.
- B. Haptics is the study of touch—touching other people, if done appropriately, tends to facilitate persuasion.
 - 1) Studies reveal that a slight touch increases compliance, sales, and generates positive evaluations.
 - 2) The nature of touch can influence perceptions (e.g., people attribute traits to others based on handshakes).
 - 3) Yet the “Midas Touch” is a tricky tactic, as it requires that persuaders consider factors such as context, gender, and culture to determine what is appropriate.
- C. Proxemics is the study of how we use space to communicate.
 - 1) Being geographically close to another person leads to persuasion, perhaps because of perceived similarity between persuader and persuadee.
 - 2) There are some cases in which invading personal space may be more persuasive.
 - 3) Expectancy Violations Theory suggests that invading another person's space facilitates persuasion if the invader is perceived as rewarding, but hinders persuasion if the invader is not perceived as rewarding.
- D. Chronemics is the study of how time is used to communicate.
 - 1) People with a lot of status get away with making others wait.
 - 2) By providing people limited time to purchase a product, they may be more persuaded to buy it.
 - a. Psychological Reactance suggests that when an item is scarce, individuals react defensively by wanting the item more than before.
 - 3) “Non-urgency” tactics, e.g., providing people with a lot of time to make a decision, can also be persuasive.
- E. Artifacts and physical features of the environment can facilitate persuasion.
 - 1) First impressions are often based on nonverbal cues (e.g., clothing, grooming, cosmetics, tattoos, hair length, and body piercings).
 - 2) The way in which an environment is structured (e.g., is it tidy or are products placed in easily observable spots?) affects persuasion.
 - a. The appearance of a professor's office influences students' perceptions.
 - b. Model homes utilize downsized furniture to make the place seem tidy.
 - c. Supermarkets strategically place items in particular locations to increase purchases.
 - 3) Though high-status clothing may enhance credibility, sometimes dressing like members of one's audience is most persuasive.
- F. A person's physical appearance affects how persuasive he or she is.
 - 1) Physically attractive people are more persuasive than physically unattractive people.
 - a. The halo effect, whereby attractive individuals are seen in a positive light, may explain why attractive individuals encounter successful persuasive outcomes.
 - 2) Endomorphs (people with round body-shapes) tend to be less persuasive than ectomorphs (thin people) and mesomorphs (muscular people).
 - a. Perceptions based on body shape can be dependent upon factors such as meal size.
 - 3) Mature-faced people are perceived as competent, and baby-faced people are perceived as trustworthy.

- a. Hence, mature-faced people are more persuasive when their expertise is questioned, and baby-faced people are more persuasive when their trustworthiness is questioned.
- 4) Bald politicians have not been as successful as ones with a full head of hair.
- 5) The match-up hypothesis suggests that persuasion is enhanced when endorsers are paired with products that emphasize characteristics of the endorsers.
- 5) Tall people, especially tall men, tend to be more persuasive than shorter people.
- G. Paralinguistics is the study of vocal stimuli.
 - 1) Though considerable research indicates that people who speak clearly and at a fast rate are persuasive, other variables (e.g., audience involvement) may mediate this relationship.
 - 2) Synthetic voices are just as persuasive as real human voices.
- H. (Box 8.2) The way you walk might make you vulnerable to attacks from predators.
- I. (Box 8.3) Individuals high in the need for touch (NFTs) tend to feel the merchandise they browse. Instrumental NFTs touch to evaluate products. Autotelic NTFs touch for their enjoyment.
- J. (Box 8.4) The perceived attractiveness of an individual is determined by the company he or she keeps.