

Communication Strategies



Paraverbal Communication

Paraverbal communication refers to the messages that we transmit through the tone, pitch, and pacing of our voices. It is *how we say something*, not *what we say*. It has been said that paraverbal message accounts for approximately 38% of what is communicated. A sentence can convey entirely different meanings depending on the emphasis on words and the tone of voice.

For example say out loud the following phrase three times, each time emphasise the word highlighted.

1. I didn't **say** you were stupid - (Implying they never said it)
2. I didn't say **you** were stupid - (Implying they were talking about someone else)
3. I didn't say you were **stupid** - (Implying you got it wrong, followed by an insult)

Body Language

The way in which our body speaks to others.

THE WAY THAT WE ARE STANDING OR SITTING

Think for a moment about different types of posture and the message that they relay.

- Sitting hunched over typically indicates stress or discomfort.
- Leaning back when standing or sitting indicates a casual and relaxed demeanour.
- Standing ramrod straight typically indicates stiffness and anxiety.

THE POSITION OF OUR ARMS, LEGS, FEET, AND HANDS

- Crossed arms and legs often indicate a closed mind.
- Fidgeting is usually a sign of boredom or nervousness.

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

- Smiles and frowns speak a million words.





Appreciative Inquiry

The four stages in the Appreciative Inquiry model are known as the 4-D cycle. They are:

Discovery. Mobilising the whole system by engaging all stakeholders in the articulation of strengths and best practices. Identifying “The best of what has been and what is.”

Dream. Creating a clear results-oriented vision in relation to discovered potential and in relation to questions of higher purpose, such as “What does the world call us to become?”

Design. Creating possibility propositions of the idea organisation, articulating an organisation design that is capable of drawing upon and magnifying the positive core to realise the newly expressed dream.

Destiny. Strengthening the affirmative capability of the whole system, enabling it to build hope and sustain momentum for ongoing positive change and high

Positive Signals

- **Non-Verbal:** Head nods and an interested facial expression will show the speaker that you are listening.
- **Quasi-Verbal:** Fillers words like, “uh-huh,” and “mm-hmmm,” show the speaker that you are awake and interested in the conversation.
- **Verbal:** Asking open questions using the six roots discussed earlier (who, what, where, when, why, how), paraphrasing, and asking summary questions, are all key tools for active listening.

Speaking Like a Star

Situation

First, state what the situation is. Try to make this no longer than one sentence. If you are having trouble, ask yourself, “Where?,” “Who?” and, “When?”

Example: “On Tuesday, I was in a director’s meeting at the main plant.”

Task

Next, briefly state what your task was. Again, this should be no longer than one sentence. Use the question, “What?” to frame your sentence, and add the “Why?” if appropriate.

Example: “I was asked to present last year’s sales figures to the group.”

Action

Now, state what you did to resolve the problem in one sentence. Use the question, “How?” to frame this part of the statement.

Example: “I pulled out my laptop, fired up PowerPoint, and presented my slide show.”

Result

Last, state what the result was. This will often use a combination of the six roots.

Example: “Everyone was wowed by my prep work, and by our great figures!”

