

Communication goes far beyond talking

Body Talk: Part I

You Cannot Not Communicate. Yes, this is a double negative, but it's ok. What this little phrase means is that everything you do communicates something about who you are, your intentions, your fears, your lusts, your disgusts, your feelings toward others, and more. You cannot avoid communicating. Turn your back to somebody, and it sends a powerful signal. Wear conservative clothing or no clothing at all, and you will send a message. And, believe it or not, you are still talking even though you might have stopped speaking.

The body is a powerful persuasive tool. In fact, more than 90% of all of the messages we send to others are not the talking bits, but the non-talking bits. We call this nonverbal communication. You've probably heard the phrase, "it's not what you say but how you say it." I'd like to explore with you some of the ways you might be communicating with others without even knowing it.

Kinesics: Communicating through movements. I'd bet money that most of you can't identify your own walking style, or what we call your gait. I guarantee, however, that your friends in the mall can identify you based upon your walk long before seeing your face. Everyone has a unique walking style—a combination of elements including the vertical and horizontal spacing between your footsteps, the amount of motion your arms make when they swing, your posture, head positioning and movements, tempo of your footsteps, and more. There is some interesting research on this too that says that those who walk faster in the workplace tend to get raises and promotions more often than those who walk slowly. Perhaps by walking faster, they look like they have somewhere important to go, and therefore are in high demand. Worth considering, huh? Don't have anywhere to go? Walk fast anyway, just in case.

Proxemics: Communicating via the use of distance and space. Ever known someone who stands way too close when talking to you? There is even a funny Seinfeld episode about this. So what do you do? Move away until you are back in your comfort zone? Then the other person no longer feels comfortable, and will probably move back into your personal bubble. Now you're back where you started. I've been there. It's aggravating! Your gender makes a big difference too. Typically, there will be more space used during male-male conversations, than female-female. This has more to do with social conditioning than with any conscious decision. In my opinion, the most interesting sorts of observations are made when examining the use of spacing by those at parties

or clubs, or traditional hook-up spots. How do you know when she's not interested? Are her arms folded, is she angling her body perpendicular to yours instead of parallel, is she slowly increasing the amount of space between you? Most people demonstrate "no" long before actually saying "no." What are your proxemics telling others?

Occulesics: Communication through the eyes. Most people have heard the statement that "the eyes are the windows of the soul." The eyes are sometimes mysterious, deceptive, subtle, blatantly truthful, seductive, and even scary. What can you do with the eyes? You can roll them, blink them, widen them, squint

them, bat them with your eyelashes. You can also show intrigue by raising an eyebrow ala Spock. And then we get to eye contact. Three variables to watch here: where you are looking, how long you are looking, and how often you are looking. Combined, the eyes can communicate more than 10,000 different messages. Gentlemen, one glance might not get you into trouble, but if you're constantly staring at the wrong place or looking every two seconds, she's going to get mad at you. Ladies, look a little longer if you're interested. Guys aren't that smart. They're expecting 4 seconds and you're only giving them 2, and thinking you've moved on to someone else. Want to know if someone is lying? Look at the pupils. If the pupils begin to contract during questioning, the interviewee is stressed and likely lying to you. So, are your eyes giving you away? Better believe it!

Artifactual Communication: Communication through artificial coverings. Anything that alters your body image belongs here. This includes clothing, jewelry, tattoos, piercings, hairstyles, make-up, implants, and cosmetic upgrades. In an ideal world, we wouldn't judge people based upon their looks. But we don't live in an ideal world. That's why, for example, it's important to dress not for the job we have, but for the job we want to have. That's why, it might be a good idea to cover up tattoos and remove piercings during job interviews. Lady Gaga dressed in a meat dress for the VMA Awards. She wanted to be noticed; she wanted to make a point; she wanted to shock. She understands the power of outward appearance. There's nothing wrong with this because she's thinking strategically. Are you?

Don't underestimate the power of body language. If our bodies are always talking, then it behooves us all to start paying more attention to the many ways that we communicate without words. Communication Matters!

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R.A stands for Removing Assistants

Residence Life out with the old in with the new

For the first time in years, Fayetteville State University will not have RAs (residential assistants) during the 2010-2011 academic year. Reasons for this momentous change in Residence Life procedure vary from insufficient funds to pay the RAs to the belief that RAs are no longer needed. Nevertheless, the most

probable reason for getting rid of RAs is due to budget cuts. Still, some residents feel as though getting rid of the RAs was one of the dumbest things Residence Life could have done. Other residents see this as an opportunity to throw more parties and roam from room to room knowing that their chances of getting caught are low. Both views could mean more power to the residents and more problems for the staff.

One of the greatest joys of having RAs was knowing that regardless of what time of night it was, even if it was two in the morning, if you lost your key, you could contact the RA on call and they would assist you. Another advantage of having an RA was to relieve the RLC's (residence life coordinators) and RD's (resident directors) from having to do all the work themselves. RAs meant fun programs, free food, and someone to talk to about whatever was going on. With RAs out of the picture things can spiral out of control.

"Students got rowdy with the RAs. I can only imagine what'll happen without them," says Nathalie Rivera, a former Bronco.

The removal of RAs could lead to dra-

matic situations such as rowdy alcohol parties, more break-ins and resident's goods being stolen, more sleepovers for buddies who need a place to stay for a while and worst of all, more pest problems due to the lack of enforcement of a resident to keep their room clean. In a time of economic difficulties, cutting RAs may have been the best thing to do financially. However, socially, it may have been the worst thing.

Goodbye RAs and hello PAs (programming assistants.) PAs are the new group of students hired by Residence Life who attend FSU, who have a good GPA standing, as well as a sociable and friendly personalities. One of the roles of the Program Assistants is to assist Residence Life in creating fun, intellectual and safe programs for the residents during their stay in the dorms. Yea, we may all be thinking that RAs were more involved with Residence Life than the new PAs, but who is to say that PAs won't do a great job?

As a former RA, considering all the duties of a RA, I believe the new PAs will do a great job.

This is a new opportunity for Residence Life to establish a new elite force of willing energetic students to help ensure that all the residents enjoy their experience at FSU. With this stated, we as students, young adults and residents of the dorms should take the initiative to do the right thing and support the PAs by attending their programs.

CORTNEY
SLAUGHTER

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