

Workplace

Diversity



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



Stop Discrimination

To prevent discrimination you must educate managers and employees about what constitutes discrimination and how they must behave in order to avoid committing discriminatory actions.

Actions

- Make sure you understand federal laws, and any additional laws enacted in your state or country. The human resources department will provide up-to-date information if you are employed in a large organisation. Alternatively visit web sites or purchase books and periodicals.
- Foster communications regarding fairness, diversity, and discrimination.
- Understand the unique needs of each ethnic, cultural, disability or lifestyle group.

Organisations should look to develop the following policies and **make them mandatory**.

Anti-discrimination. Define discrimination.

Anti-harassment. Define harassment, clearly state it is prohibited.

Other Policies. Similarly, create and publish policies for complaints, anti-violence.

Workplace Changes

- Understand the values and beliefs of your colleagues.
- Learn how to value the uniqueness of your colleagues
- Watch out for hostility among co-workers? What distinctive background characteristics can you observe?
- Suggest and implement workshops aimed at understanding and eliminating discrimination.

Discriminatory Terms

- **Ablism.** Beliefs and/or behaviours against disabled people.
- **Ageism.** Beliefs and/or behaviours against people because of their age.
- **Anti-Semitism.** Beliefs and/or behaviours directed against Jews.
- **Anti-Arab discrimination.** Beliefs and/or behaviours against Arabs
- **Classicism.** Beliefs and/or behaviours based on social class, usually against poorer working class individuals.
- **Discrimination.** Beliefs and/or behaviours against individuals or groups based on perceived differences.
- **Ethnocentrism.** Beliefs and/or behaviours based on ethnic differences.
- **Heterosexism.** Beliefs and/or behaviours directed against gay, lesbian, and/or transgender.
- **Racism** Beliefs and/or behaviours against people because of their race
- **Sexism.** Beliefs and/or behaviours against women.

