

**DIGI SCHOOL 2020-1-SK01-KA226-SCH-094350**

**Non-verbal communication – gestures**

**The aim of communication**is a process that conveys messages of which purpose is understanding. It has existed in the human community since its beginning.

It is fundamental in common discourse when sharing information, influencing others and reaching some form of understanding. It is an ongoing process, when meeting other people either by coincidence or by chance. It is a life necessity of all individuals as well as organizations and the whole society.

**The most frequent subdivision of communication:**

1. **Verbal communication –** uses words
2. **Non-verbal communication –** using other means than words
3. **Communication using deeds –** effect of deeds

**The importance of non-verbal communication**

In a non-verbal communication people express their mental state, feelings, emotions, experience, or thoughts even more accurately and truly than by using words. The way we use our bodies to express ourselves is usually conditioned by our personality and above all by our temperament. It is also dependent on the place we live and the majority of expressions are culturally conditioned. In the process of communication, it is impossible to omit its non-verbal form, it can be only restrained.

There are differences between men and women, children and adults, and different social groups. Our family traditions and the cultural background we originate from is reflected in our outer form of expression. The body language says a lot about our health condition.

We communicate with other people in many forms, verbally as well as non-verbally. Non-verbal communication (the communication without words) can serve a variety of social purposes that can be divided into four groups:

1. helping the speech
2. substituting the speech
3. expressing attitude
4. expressing emotions

Non-verbal communication (communication without words) can be of different importance to us, it can show:

1. Interest in communication – by turning our bodies, facial expression and gesticulation we express the interest in communication
2. We show who we are – when meeting somebody, we create the first impression on behalf of the external features, looks, subconscious factors such as familiarity with us or other people who we know, facial expression, posture.
3. We influence the behaviour of others – we affect others with gestures, with what we are wearing, how we care about our appearance
4. We influence the course of a mutual meeting – non-verbal communication helps us to begin, regulate, and end the personal contact. Most commonly it is facial expression, posture, and gesticulation.

**Forms of non-verbal communication:**

**Eye contact –** type of look

**Facial expression –** movements of eyes, mouth, facial muscles

**Kinesics –** movements of body, walk

**Gestures –** hand movements

**Haptic –** touches

**Proximity –** distance from others

**Territoriality -** space and its occupation

**Posture –** body, hands, and legs positioning

**Paralinguistics –** tone of voice, speed and fluency of speech

**Chronemics –** dealing with the time while communicating

**Neurovegetative reactions –** human reactions on communication stimuli – shaking of hands, blushing

**Environment –** says about the person living within the given environment

**Props –** overall looks, adjustment of appearance, scent, car, house

**Gestures** – gesticulation

**Gestures** are (from the [lat](https://sk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin%C4%8Dina). notion *gest* – free, unintentional hand movement, or other part of our body) signs, body movements (mainly hands) that help people when speaking; it is a type of non-verbal communication, based on the usage of gestures.

Gestures are also used in acting. People use from 150 – 5 000 gesticulation elements. Gesticulation uses 2 groups of gestures:

* innate
* acquired
  + acquired subconsciously – within society, in which the individual moves
  + conscious – influenced by models, from whom the individual obtains the gestures by observing

From a typological point of view, we recognize involuntary gestures, unconscious and deliberate, conscious. In the first case it is about gestures that are more or less genetically given, in the second case they are obtained by observing, or are learned (trained). The speaker, while speaking, has to consider that gestures are well seen and read that is why they should appear subtle and delicate.

Both circumstances are mutually related and respecting them should lead the speaker to reduced usage of gestures because their overuse especially in first type speeches (general, relevant, professional-educational) would come over as disruptive.

During gesticulation the genetic traits determined by the temperament type and corrected by the rational component of consciousness of gesticulation activity should dominate.

Bad habits in this area are in comparison to the facial expression even more serious. There are several reasons why. They are more visible, more often and are larger in scale.

Form the large number of individual bad habits it is possible to generalize mainly the following ones:

* mechanical and stereotypical movements of the right hand,
* chopping into the air with an open palm
* frequent rising of the index finger
* hitting the table
* mechanical turning of the palm up and down
* tapping the fingers on the table (speakers’ desk)
* conspicuous finger movement (creating different finger figures, or finger snapping),
* ring twisting

The above-mentioned bad habits also reach into the area of kinesics (body movement, or its parts), that is why it is more appropriate in practical language the usage of the term gesture-kinetical bad habits. Similar to the previous ones, they are also of strongly individual character even though a certain form of generalization is still present too.

Among the most general bad habits belong the following ones:

* stroking of the moustache, beard/chin, neck
* scratching of one hand with the other
* nervous head shakes
* supporting the head with the hand
* unbuttoning and buttoning the jacket (sweater)
* hair styling
* adjusting the tie
* playing with the necklace
* foot tapping on the floor
* tucking the thumbs behind the waistcoat
* hands in the pockets
* crossing the arms or placing them on the hips
* sliding the fingers behind the collar
* browsing through papers

People often consciously use their body language to emphasise their arguments.

However, this is not acceptable, if you want to persuade somebody to do something that is against their own interests. What is more, uncontrolled gestures can lead to loss of trust.

Maybe you say the right things but your body does not agree. Respectively, if your body language does not correspond with your words, the effect is usually negative. When your verbal and non-verbal communication aren´t in agreement.