Welcome to *The Nonverbal Communication Book*

The Nonverbal Communication Book is one of many textbooks currently available for the popular Nonverbal Communication course. This book, however, is different in several important respects. Here I explain the focus of the text, its plan and organization, and the ways it may be used.

FOCUS OF *THE NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION BOOK*

This text is designed to cover both the theory and research in nonverbal communication and to help you develop your nonverbal skills. More specifically, this text aims to:

- Explain the channels or codes of nonverbal communication and how you send and receive nonverbal messages.
- Explain the importance and the role of culture in both sending and receiving nonverbal messages.
- Increase awareness of the ways in which you interpret the nonverbal behaviors of others and the ways in which you use nonverbal behaviors yourself.
- Increase your accuracy in detecting nonverbal communication cues.
- Increase your effectiveness in your use of nonverbal cues.

PLAN OF *THE NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION BOOK*

The Nonverbal Communication Book is divided into three parts, consisting of 10 chapters, two appendixes, and a glossary of technical terms.

Part One (Foundations of Nonverbal Communication) consists of one chapter that presents an introduction to nonverbal communication, explaining the nature of nonverbal communication, the benefits to be derived from the study of nonverbal communication, and the major principles governing nonverbal communication. In addition, for those who are taking this course as their only or first course in communication, a brief and general introduction to human communication is provided.

Part Two (The Codes of Nonverbal Communication) consists of eight chapters (Chapters 2–9) that identify the codes of nonverbal communication—the channels you use in sending and receiving nonverbal messages—your body, face, eyes, artifacts such as jewelry and clothing, space, touch, paralanguage and silence, and time.

Part Three (Putting It All Together) consists of one chapter (Chapter 10) in which we put it all together and explain four areas that have been the focus of a great deal of nonverbal research and illustrate how all the channels work together: attraction, lying, immediacy, and power.

Appendix A provides some initial guidance in conducting a nonverbal research study and suggestions for completing this standard (and most exciting) term project.

Appendix B provides some suggestions for creating a video of some aspect of nonverbal communication and a list of sample videos that might be used as examples for this type of project. These videos may also prove useful in connection with the text. They do a great deal of what a printed text cannot do and so make really useful ancillaries.

A glossary of nonverbal concepts is included at the end of the text to clarify further the technical terms of this area of study.

Text and Exercises

Each chapter contains both text and exercises. After reading about a specific area of nonverbal communication, a variety of different types of exercises invite you to, for example, ensure your understanding of key concepts, explore your own nonverbal communication, or investigate ways to enhance your nonverbal competence and skill. The exercises are an essential part of this approach, which requires active learning throughout the course. In fact, you'll find it requires greater effort—more introspection, more soul searching, more self-interaction—than most of your courses. Some exercises are integrated into the text narrative. These are noted in brackets ([ ]) in the Table of Contents and in the chapter openers' list of Contents.

This book presents a three-step system for learning nonverbal communication:

- Step 1. Identification of objectives
- Step 2. Text explaining the content relative to the objectives
- Step 3. Exercises to encourage you to apply what was covered in Step 2 in order to achieve the objectives noted in Step 1. Depending on the nature and goals of your specific nonverbal communication course, some exercises (because of their focus or format) will prove more relevant than others. Consequently, a large number of exercises (60 in all) are included so that selections may be made appropriate to the specific course goals.

Each of the 10 chapters ends with a summary, a list of key terms presented as an exercise, and an exercise called "And in Addition" in which you're asked to add to the contents of the chapter and, if possible, share your additions with others in the course.

Chapter Objectives

Learning objectives open each of the chapters. These objectives spell out what you should be able to do after you read the chapter and complete the exercises. The objectives will help guide you in your reading and doing the exercises. Read these at the beginning of the chapter and, after reading the chapter, return to these and test yourself to make sure you understand the concepts and can apply the skills. These objectives highlight the major concepts and skills of the chapter. They do not include all the objectives a particular course may specify or that you'll gain from a given chapter. The learning objectives system used here—and there are a variety of these—identifies three major levels of thinking, each of which is included throughout the text:

- **Knowledge** (recalling, remembering, and comprehending), introduced by such specific verbs as *define*, *paraphrase*, *describe*, and *differentiate*.

- **Application** (applying a concept to a new situation), introduced by such specific verbs as *diagram*, *illustrate*, *use*, and *give examples*.
- **Problem solving** (analyzing/breaking a concept into its parts, synthesizing/combining elements into a new whole, and evaluating/making value or appropriateness judgments), introduced by such specific verbs as *assess*, *construct*, *organize*, and *evaluate*.

Each of the exercises is introduced by one of these learning objective terms.

Special Features

Each of the code chapters, the chapters in Part Two (Chapters 2–9), contain a number of special features.

- **Chapter-opening exercise.** Each of these chapters begins with a brief exercise that is designed to stimulate you to think about your own use of some aspect of nonverbal communication discussed in the chapter.
- **Nonverbal politeness.** Each of the code chapters contains a brief politeness note that points out some of the politeness implications of the particular nonverbal communication channel.
- **On the Job.** Boxes that highlight a variety of workplace situations involving nonverbal communication are included in Chapters 2–9; these boxes invite you to use your newly acquired nonverbal skills to help resolve (or at least manage) an array of different issues.
- **If you want to** items are included in these code chapters to illustrate that the codes (although covered in separate chapters) actually work together in communicating meaning and also to demonstrate how very practical the study of nonverbal communication is.

WAYS OF USING *THE NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION BOOK*

This book can be used in a variety of ways:

- **Offline and online.** The text can be used as any text in the "regular" classroom. With a hardcopy, students are able to respond to the exercises in the text and retain it as a record of the course and their own nonverbal communication behavior or scan or photocopy the pages to turn in to the instructor or share with other students. This text is also well suited to e-courses. In that case, students would be able to turn in the worksheets, share them with others taking the class, and discuss them online.
- **Alone or in a package**. The book provides thorough coverage of nonverbal communication and so could be used as the sole course textbook or it can be used in conjunction with a popular book such as *The Everything Body Language* (Hagen, 2011), *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Body Language* (Andersen, 2004), or *Body Language for Dummies* (Kuhnke, 2007)—all excellent books despite their popular appeal. Or, it could be used with a more focused popular book such as *Multicultural Manners* (Dresser, 2005), *Essential Do's and Taboos* (Axtell, 2007), or any of the inexpensive books on etiquette (most of which are primarily devoted to nonverbal behavior).

That pretty much explains the focus of the book, the plan of the book, and the ways in which it may be used. Now, we're ready to embark on what will prove to be an exciting journey into the world of nonverbal communication. Of course, it's a world that you've lived in all your lives. But, you may not have thought about it in the ways presented here. We'll bring to consciousness the ways nonverbal communication works with the ultimate aim of enabling you to control and manage this form of communication more effectively.

Joe DeVito
jadevito@earthlink.net
http://tcbdevito.blogspot.com