

## **Operations Training**

### **Non-Verbal Communication Skills**

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**Purpose:** Awareness of non-verbal communications in the workplace and what impact it has. Recognize ways to improve all communications through proactive use of non-verbal techniques.

**Preparation:** None

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**Facilitator:** Begin the session by stating the name and purpose of the session. Then, break them up into small groups of 3-4 people.

Ask each group to answer the following questions:

1. How do you feel when someone speaks without looking at you? What does it make you think about them and the situation?
2. Identify three facial expressions that would make someone feel unwelcome. Put labels to them.
3. Identify three non-verbal (physical) behaviors or techniques that would make someone feel like you were intently listening to them in conversations.

**Facilitator:** Get feedback from these questions from the different groups.

Pick two people (people that are more verbal and can have fun in a group) to stand up (one at a time) and exhibit the following behavior (You can also do both examples yourself if you don't want others to have to participate):

1. Frown and have a scowl on their face and tell about a fun vacation. Have them speak harshly as well. (Conclusion: Vacation didn't sound so good, did it?)
2. Smile and speak with energy and excitement (not over the top) about an insurance policy detail (new coverage detail, exclusion, etc.)

**Facilitator:** Thank the people for participating. Ask for feedback.

1. How does this apply in our workplace?
2. What can we do in our culture to make sure we make our non-verbal communications are positive vs negative?
3. Have the group list non-verbal communication items in the following two areas:
  - a. Positive Non verbal Communications in the workplace.
  - b. Negative Non verbal Communications in the workplace.

**Facilitator read the following as a closing:**

Non-verbal communication can be one of the most damaging or most productive elements in the workplace. A smile tends to make two people happy (you and the person receiving it). Closed body language (legs crossed, arms folded, turning away from someone), will impact the quality and impact of any communication.

We spend a tremendous amount of our lives at work. A great work environment and a productive work environment is very dependent on each individual doing their part. Non-verbal communication will have a huge impact on this work environment as well as a huge impact on productivity, trust, and success.

When someone smiles, is open, gives good eye contact, and shows they are listening and care, we tend to trust more, and get more accomplished.

In today's times, we tend to be so overwhelmed and feel the need to multitask. Unfortunately, we probably do need to multitask in many cases. But, when it has to do with people, my recommendation is to NEVER multitask and find a way to be "in the moment" or "Present" with whomever you are engaged. People who can focus attention on the task at hand and the person across from them as if they are the only thing in the world that matters, tend to be more productive and have greater life success. We have so many distractions with technology and work complexity (phones, computers, hand held devices, people, etc.) that we have become comfortable engaging with all of them at the same time. People who have the ability to focus and truly be present with human relationships will separate themselves from the crowd. They will have stronger relationships and will ultimately be more productive. Non-verbal communications are the most prevailing element of being "present".

Non-verbal communication impacts relationships more than any other factor that I know. Relationships in the insurance industry are critical internally and externally. Working on our non-verbal skills to be highly effective and positive will create a great work environment as well as a great client experience.

**Facilitator:** Ask the group to commit to ONE non-verbal skill behavior improvement as a ticket to exit the meeting!