

## NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION SESSION

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### ABSTRACT

Non-verbal communication (body language) is widely discussed in personal selling and sales management text books and in articles written for the professional (non-academic) marketing literature. The topic has received some considerable treatment in the academic literature of the psychology discipline. However, it appears that the manuscript in the *Journal of Marketing Education* presents the first empirical assessment of the usefulness of this set of techniques in a marketing setting. Students in a personal selling class employed the technique in a real world selling endeavor and found that it possessed merit.

The article found that training in non-verbal communication can be an effective tool in:

- Enhancing selling productivity
- Improving trainee self-reports on the value of their training

Various implications related to this topic are worthy of discussion:

#### 1. Questions relating to implications for teaching personal selling:

- Can non-verbal communication be taught?
- What are the best ways of instilling non-verbal communication skills?
- Should more emphasis be placed on "reading" non-verbal communication? (Most of the literature emphasizes using body language to transmit, not interpret meaning).

#### 2. Questions relating to implications for marketing education in general.

- How can marketing instructors effectively employ non-verbal communication in the classroom when they lecture or lead class discussion?
- Should students who verbally present case analyses in various marketing classes receive instruction in non-verbal communication? It is the impression of the writer that most students are woefully deficient in this regard. Yet they will be required to make group presentations when they enter their professions.

- Should all marketing majors be taught non-verbal communication, even if they do not enroll in a personal selling course?
- On-line courses may not be effective for learning non-verbal communication. True or false? Is this a serious shortcoming of such courses?