

Interpersonal Communication

Group students into groups of two and ask students to recall a difficult decision they once made and begin discussing this topic with their partner.

- After roughly 15-30 seconds, without any further explanation, instruct students to continue the conversation while making direct and unwavering eye contact. Students should not look anywhere else.
- After 15-20 seconds, next ask students to stop making eye contact and look away from their partner (i.e., at the floor, over their shoulder, etc.) while continuing the conversation. Students should not look their partner in the eye.
- Continue this pattern of instructing to students to incorporate other non-verbal cues into their conversation at short intervals of 15-20 seconds each. In no specific order, consider including as many of the below styles as time permits and feel free to add in an additional topic in order for students to have information to talk about without stopping:
 - Physical Space – Instruct students to stand about 1 ft. apart from each other while speaking, then instruct them to step back (approx. 5 feet) apart.
 - Physical Orientation – Instruct students to continue speaking while one member of each pair turns around. One person should have their back to their partner, and the other person should be facing their partner's back.
 - Physical Touch – Instruct students to continue the conversation while making some form of sustained physical contact (i.e., hand on the shoulder, holding hands, fist bump or high five...etc.)
 - Body Language – Instruct students to speak while holding their arms crossed/folded at their chest, then with their hands on their hips.
 - Facial Expressions – Instruct students to speak with as little expression as possible (i.e., flat affect- so smiling, frowning, crying...etc.)

- Hand Gestures – Instruct students to put their hands by their sides and continue the conversation without moving them or using any hand gestures. Then, reserve it and instruct them to use big, exaggerated hand gestures while speaking.
- Turn-Taking – Instruct students to speak at the same time, interrupting each other often.
- Speed of Speech – Instruct students to speak quickly progressing to one thought to the next without any pauses, then very slowly perhaps with a lot of pauses and use of filler words (i.e., umm, so, uh, hmm... etc.)
- Volume of Speech – Instruct students to whisper their when they speak so as not to let others hear them, then follow it up by asking students to speak loudly with their partner.
- Intonation of Speech – Instruct students to speak with as little tone as possible in their voice (i.e., very flat- no ups and downs in pitch, accenting syllables, or questions... etc.). Then instruct students to speak as if each sentence were a question, regardless of if it is or isn't (i.e., the intonation should rise and get higher toward the end of each statement).

<https://www.afsusa.org/educators/lesson-plans/non-verbal-communication/>