

# THE POWER OF DISCERNMENT AND INFLUENCE

## (Available to everyone, but employed by few)

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### Executive Summary

The world beyond words takes us from an understanding of Non Verbal Behavior to an understanding of something far more valuable for success ("Non Verbal Intelligence" by Robert B Galdini)

Why is it that some people have all the elements of success - education, skill sets, integrity and motivation - but can't seem to move from effectiveness to excellence in their careers? Behavior expert Joe Navarro in his seminal work titled 'Louder than Words' reveals the long sought answer. The power of discernment, he says, teaches how to master Non Verbal Intelligence, the ability to interpret and use non verbal signals - in poker terms, "tells"- in business to assess and influence others. It simply means how to use this rudimentary yet powerful "comfort/discomfort" model to decode what really is being said at meetings, interviews, negotiations, presentations, business meals and more, including the casual exchanges that often impact decisions and reputations.

What is advisable here is to jump start our career as we discover how to:

- Read body language to understand what clients, co workers, interviewers or interviewees are thinking, feeling or intending and discern non verbal cues of concern, disagreement or doubt even over the phone.
- Master all the important first impressions and use settings, seating's and gestures to inspire and captivate.
- Recognize habits that send the wrong message, from nail biting to wearing inappropriate attire - and see what posture, work practices, work spaces and even electronic habits say about people.
- Become culturally aware and gender sensitive, from best handshake practices to personal space preferences.
- Learn what the "comfort dividend" can do for us and our business.
- Explore how the concept of "curbside appeal" applies to us and our business and can mean

the difference between the average and exceptional.

Read on to unravel all this!

### THE NARRATIVE

To use a 21st century analogy, Non verbal (NV) Intelligence is like a computer programme: it has tremendous capacity, yet most of us use only a few of its applications, not realizing there are many other valuable features that can assist us in communicating more effectively and achieving our goals. In addition, like any software, NV Intelligence needs to be activated, implemented, upgraded occasionally, and refined with use.

In every area of life, from childhood to dating to business, we're bombarded by images, emblems, symbols acts and behaviors that transmit ideas, thoughts messages and emotions nonverbally. We also use these tactics to draw attention to ourselves, to highlight what we feel is important, to magnify the impact of our words and express what words cannot.

Even Verbal communication has Non Verbal component: the tone, manner, cadence, volume and duration of speech are just as important as what is said; as are the non verbals of pauses and silence.

In business, the setting where a meeting or a speech takes place the 'curb side' appeal of a building - its architecture, art work, ornaments and lighting, advertising, perceptions and how we are treated are all part of the NV communication process. Colors too enter into a NV communication, as do seemingly insignificant particulars such as the location of the receptionist's desk and whether a security guard sits or stands. All of these communicate something to the people.

The color we choose for Power Point Presentations, the speed and appearance of our web sites, the (official or unofficial) company dress code and whether you have "casual Fridays"; whether you wear label pin, what your desk looks like; even what time you arrive and leave each day - all of these NVs are constantly communicating about you and your business.

Intangible qualities such as your attitude, preparation, humility, presence and managerial style

are also non verbal. They have profound impact, particularly if you are in a leadership position.

You only need to look at leaders of industry and politics to see the mastery of NV Communication. When we praise their confidence, charisma, empathy vision and leadership, we're often talking about NV's. Our best business too gets the NVs right: When we talk about image, branding, halo effect, stickiness, traction, service, responsiveness and influence, we are often talking about NV's, as they achieve tangible victories thro' intangible means. They are as subtle as the flicker of an eye lid, but they can transform relationships for NVs speak louder than words.

They foster trust comfort, productivity and respect. They unite rather than divide, bond rather than alienate; elicit the best from each to the benefit of all. That is why NV Intelligence is the ultimate requirement for business success.

### **THIN SLICE ASSESSMENTS (TSA) - SNAP DECISIONS WITH SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES**

We humans are born with big, busy brains that love to learn. Sporting a stunning lack of physical defenses (no shell, no claws, no beak, no wings, no fangs, no speed), we have had to depend for our survival on our mental agility: our ability to quickly size up situation, take decisions based on our impressions, learn from everything that happens, and remember what we have learned. We walk around with our radar always switched on. The world is constantly "speaking" to us thro' our senses, sending a constant stream of impressions, and we are continuously assessing what those impressions mean. In short, we are constantly making decisions based on an astonishingly small amount of information and we do so in an astonishingly short time. This is what is meant by TSA. TSA give remarkable insights into others, how we feel about them, their trustworthiness and their feelings about us. Most of the data in which we base this millisecond make or break evaluations are the 'Non Verbal's

### **MORE THAN SKIN DEEP: NON VERBALS OF OUR APPEARANCE**

It's interesting how we profess to dismiss matters of appearance, while we are so inclined towards both paradoxical fixations, the unkempt fellow standing too close to our ear and also the attractive woman behind the perfume counter.

Our predilection for aesthetics and beauty is actually hardwired in us. Every culture has an appreciation for beauty, health, youth, aesthetics and symmetry that can be explained only as an

evolutionary necessity.

The profit aspect of appearance has also been well studied and is referred to as the "beauty dividend". Economists find that people who are good looking tend to earn more money, as they tend to get hired and promoted more frequently. The beauty dividend is something that the advertisers have known for a long time, which is why you see such beautiful faces associated with the most successful beauty products or just about anything advertised.

Despite being warned not to judge a book by its cover, we inevitably do it anyway, and it gets difficult to resist the temptation of assuming that a person's outward appearance reflects some thing meaningful about his/her personality. Research shows that people tend to perceive attractive adults as more social, successful and well adjusted than less attractive adults, a phenomenon that's been termed the "what is beautiful is good" stereotype. The researchers examined how traits, which describe what people, are like, and values, which people consider what people consider important, might be related to physical attractiveness.

In order to validate this hypothesis I requested 118 university students in various schools and colleges, both in India and abroad to serve as "targets" or "judges". They completed their surveys at my behest about their values and their traits. They were then videotaped entering a room, walking around a table looking at the camera, reading a weather forecast, and leaving the room. Each judge saw a videotape of a different target chosen at random, and evaluated the target's values and then their attractiveness, along with their physical attributes. Those who were rated as attractive, especially women, were perceived as having more socially desirable personality traits, such as extroversion, openness to experience and conscientiousness, just as the researchers hypothesized.

### **HEAR WHAT I AM SAYING? THE NON VERBALS OF SPEECH**

How we speak can also change how we are perceived and how effectively we communicate. It has to do not so much with what we say, but how we say it. Speech is made up of words, but also of characteristics (Para linguistics) such as our attitude, inflection, volume, speed, cadence, emphasis, hesitation, pauses - even when we speak and when we are silent.

A loud mouth and a fast talker stand out negatively, not because of what they say, but how they say it. Conversely, we appreciate the reassuring

quality of the considerate and the deliberate talkers.

We all know it, but how ignorant we look when we fall a victim as the first category of people in the organization while appreciating the second ones. They say 'monitoring' one's communication in such situations does the trick and saves us from many embarrassing situations. The question is how many of us practice it in real time?

### **THE NON VERBALS OF LISTENING**

This brings us straight to the 'Two Way' characteristics of communication. Two essential factors in understanding our audience are empathy and being an active listener. There is a huge difference between listening and listening empathetically.

Think of someone in whom you feel comfortable in confiding. He or she is probably an empathetic listener. The research in this field has well established that physicians and stock brokers are less likely to be sued and harangued (when an investment market tanks or a bull market turns bear) if they engage in demonstrated empathetic listening and comforting displays. The managers who can listen empathetically to an employee, who has personal or work related issues, can enhance that employee's loyalty even if there is nothing he can do to help the situation.

### **REPEAT AFTER ME**

Hand in hand with active listening is 'Verbal mirroring', based on the work of renowned psychologist and author Carl Rogers (1902-1987). Verbal mirroring is a simple yet remarkably powerful therapeutic technique to quickly establish a connection with some one. This is achieved simply by listening to what the speakers says and then using that information, precisely as stated, to respond to him. If a patient said 'my home' the doctor would mirror the patient by also using the word 'home' not 'house'. If the patient said 'my child' the doctor would say 'child', not kid, not daughter (Carl Rogers - 1902-1987). Verbal mirroring is thus a powerful tool in professions where establishing rapport is the key to reach the communicator's mind, such as medicine, psychology, sales, finance and governance.

Unfortunately, most people are linguistically self centered and use their language to anchor a conversation. In order to be maximally effective, you must use the other person's language; in doing so, you mirror what is in their mind and what is linguistically-even psychologically - comforting. You are at once in synchrony. The other person subconsciously feels suddenly understood at a deeper level and tends to be more responsive.

So, listen to you clients, patients, employees and business associates for the terms they use, and use them to your advantage. Obviously, you can also do this with your loved ones. As you will see, you ill be received as being a more empathetic and better listener. Researchers have established that couples using these simple verbal mirroring techniques make themselves much more comfortable in mutual dealings than those who are more reckless in their expressions.

### **YOU ARE WHAT YOU DO: NVs OF BEHAVIOUR**

There is a co relation between etiquettes and in good NVs in that both deal with behaviors that make people feel comfortable and facilitate positive outcomes. Neatness, punctuality, preparation, attention and hard work are a just few of the NVs of behaviors that make unforgettable impressions in business settings.

Bottom line is that people notice and form impressions/opinions of you based on your behavior. And in a work setting, they notice everything; what time you arrive/leave, how many cigarette breaks you take, how much time you spend on phone talking, how many time you take sick days, quality of your work, whether you are a whiner or a hard worker, a socialite (oxygen thieves") etc. If you think others don't notice, you are in deep denial. All of your negative actions leave deep residual impressions that will work against you and your employer.

### **THE COMFORT/DISCOMFORT PARADIGM: THE FOUNDATION OF NV INTELLIGENCE**

Comfort and discomfort - pleasure and pain. This dyad comprises the essential polarity of life- We are at all times experiencing one or the other and our bodies react with a stream of chemical responses that govern our moods and shape our behaviors. The comfort/discomfort response is innate in all of us and is fundamental to our survival. Because our brains are elegantly hardwired to react this way, observing this dynamics in others can be a useful way of gauging what they are thinking, feeling or intending.

Very simply it works like this: when you observe a behavior ask yourself "Does it represent comfort or discomfort"? This question is easy to comprehend. If I were to mention courtships behaviors, you might thinks of holding hands and gazing into each other's eyes, closeness, touching, walking in step (known as body echoing or 'is praxis' - from the Greek 'is' meaning same, and 'praxis', meaning behavior) tilted heads, genuine smiles and so on.

In contrast, what do we see in someone who feels defensive, as would be the case with people trying to cover their criminal actions or guilty knowledge? We would see the opposite behaviors: distancing actions such as leaning away or withdrawing the hands and feet; stiff posture and movements, compressed, unsmiling lips; furtive looking about; and restlessness or tension.

Thus, once we anchor observations around this paradigm (comfort/discomfort), behaviors become more transparent. In many respects, our reaction to the world around us are really very binary; in the same way as our brain is binary when it comes to protecting our survival.

Not only will NVs help us establish comfort in others, but they'll help us communicate more effectively. Ever notice that great speakers and strong leaders speak with such comfort? They exude confidence and that can be achieved only through comfort displays. No matter how stressful or contentious the situation, the leader who appears unfazed (that is, who displays comfort) is the person whom we flock.

It is simply because our brain constantly alerts us to our state of comfort or discomfort, causing us to distance ourselves from what threatens us and draw close to what sustains us. This highly developed survival mechanism helps us escape danger and form the cooperative bonds that have enabled our species to survive. Like virus protection for our computer, our 'limbic brain' is always running in the background, regardless of what our neo cortex (the part of the brain responsible for conscious thought) is up to.

Joe Navarro calls this limbic nature of our as the three Fs of NVs. We freeze, flee or fight (rigidity distancing, acrimony). We are first flash- frozen in reference to threats. If freezing doesn't dispel the threat, flight is the next choice. When our back is literally or metaphorically to wall, and freezing or fleeing aren't options, we fight. Fighting is the most "expensive" option of the three Fs, as it drains energy. puts us at physical risk and pits our strength directly against the predator', which may not assure our success. In modern civilized society. We have transformed the fight response into things such as passive aggression (saying we'll do the job and then not finishing it, arguing, ranting, throwing objects at walls etc or inward aggression- punching our own hands, biting our lips or do it by proxy - nasty letters, letting our dog run in the neighbor's yard)

### **HOW THE BODY TALKS**

As you walk down the street, sit in a meeting,

converse with your boss, wait in a line at a store or watch a televised press conference or a talk show a new world is revealed to you. Seemingly, random movements by colleagues, neighbors and even our national leaders become organized into a stream of information that is rich and fluent. It becomes imperative therefore that all NVs must be understood in:

1. Context: Expression of someone whose father/mother is ill or whose job is on the line are to be respected.
2. Emphasis: It is NV punctuation. It's our body's way of making an exclamation point. In business, it is through emphasis that we demonstrate what is important or noteworthy; otherwise talk often becomes mere chatter.
3. Gravity Defying Behaviors: "Things are looking up" is an expression of opinion that has literal parallels in NVs. When people are feeling good, they are quite literally up: their NVs move skyward, in effect defying gravity (eye brows up, chin up, thumbs up and even toes up).
4. Hap tics: The more the touching action there is, the more empathetic the communication.
5. Intention Cues: Often people's bodies reveal their intentions long before they verbalize their wish. A boss turning his torso slightly away or lead foot pointing towards exit while talking to you amounts to his intention to wrap up discussion
6. Kinesics: "Often when rhetoric lapses into the grey areas of ambiguity and prevarication, a sparkle in the eye, a gentle vibration in the voice, a warm hug or hand shake may reveal the postures of mind", Kenneth Burke, in his seminal work on NVs, titled 'Language as Gesture'.
7. Micro gestures or micro expression (terms coined by renowned researcher Dr. Paul Ekman) are fleeting non verbals that can be very revealing because their speed and timing defy conscious control (a clear window into others feelings). In business a quick squinting or tensing of the lower eyelids is an indicative of discomfort.
8. Pacifying Behavior: Actions that soothe us and attempt to restore comfort. People playing with their wedding bands/rings or necklace when waiting to hear medical diagnosis are often referred to as "adaptors" - our brains way of saying to the body, "Please clam down or soothe me". By recognizing pacifiers, we can assist others and even ourselves, to ease negative

emotions.

9. Proxemics: Inter personal distance influenced by hierarchy (social and economic), culture, circumstances and our personal comfort level. Different cultures have identified these zones (Intimate, Personal, Social and Public) differently based on the prevalent practices within the culture for face to face interactions.
10. Synchrony: Nature's way of physically expressing harmony (synchronized diving, swimming, drumming (in band). Being out of 'sync' at a subconscious level undermines how we feel and destabilizes effective communication and interpersonal harmony, both in business and with friends.
11. Territorial Display: Thro' these we display our spatial needs, and how we view ourselves socially and even emotionally. In business, territorial displays can take the form of the corner office, a large desk, or an arm draped over two chairs. The higher our status (real or perceived), the more space we need or claim. Large offices, well organized ergonomically, visa a vis the cubicles of the task force or other employees of the organization speak volumes of their status, role and responsibility.
12. The Body NVs: We are socialized from childhood to control our facial expressions to gain attention, protection and rewards. That doesn't mean the face doesn't show our feelings, but it does mean that the entire body sends messages that may contradict what we see in the face. Experts in this field profess that even sleeping postures hold clue to your personality. Robert Phipps, U K's leading body language expert in a survey has identified four basic sleeping positions and said the fetal is by far the most common.

Almost 58% in U K adopt the fetal position and sleep with knees up and head down. The position is favored by people who worry too much. "The more we curl up, the more comfort we are seeking", Phipps said. The second most common position is the log with 28% Britons favoring it, the Daily Mirror reported. A straight body, with arms and legs by the side, indicates stubbornness and they can wake up stiffer than when they went to sleep, Phipps said.

Around 25% prefer the yearned position - arms stretched out in front - either chasing a dream or being chased. Yearends are their own worst critics always expecting great results. They wake up eager to face the challenges of the day, Phipps said.

Free fallers - face down, arms out stretched - make up 17% and feel they have little control over their life. Physically this is the least comfortable position.

The survey asked people to record their sleeping positions, with some naming more than one. "A good night's sleep sets you up for the following day and our sleeping positions can determine how we feel when we wake up", he said.

- a. The legs and feet: Jiggling legs and feet, pointing feet, gravity defying feet, The starter's position, leg splay, crossed legs, foot lock, leg closure are all indicative of different messages in a given situations.
- b. The Torso: Ventral fronting and ventral denial; torso lean, shield and low; shrugs and splays will convey different messages to the receiver of the communication.
- c. The Arms, Heads and Fingers: Confidence and Dominance displays of the arms; arms that withdraw. The Hands - first impressions count - ability to enhance life (feeding, carrying cradling ) or to inflict mortal injury (punching gouging, killing)
- d. The Head, Face and the Neck: The Eyes: Blocks, Squints and other distancing behavior - greatest conduit of information about the world around us and, to some extent, the world within. The nose: Experts claim to depict different types of personality thro' the shapes of noses of people and therefore, probably, the rush for the nose job. The Mouth: the smiles that disseminate different intentions and send convincing or unconvincing messages.
- e. Clothes and Accessories: I would leave it to the reader's imagination and study on the subject as to what a variety of signals they can send to the observer or the receiver.

## **APPLIED NON VERBAL INTELLIGENCE HOW YOU PRESENT**

We, all of us, are constantly under scrutiny, no matter how high or low we are in the organization. We are being observed to see if we look sharp or dreadful, presentable or dreary, alert or tired, interested or bored, confident or timid, informed or confused, respectful or disdainful, and on and on. This we can not escape; it is part of what we do. So, how do we present? De we look like a leader, or a follower, competent or incompetent? Lets now look how we can positively present ourselves by focusing on a few basic, yet critical NVs.

1. Our State of Mind. The NVs of success start

with our state of mind. Imagine an employee of a valet Parking facility who makes between Rs 300/- or Rs 500/- a day and never gets tired of saying to each of his customer "Please drive safe" with a smile and no look whatsoever of a tired person only interested in his tip. If you have a state of mind to change how you are perceived, then your NVs will change and so will others perception of you.

2. Attitude is Non Verbal. Attitude wins games, defeats enemies, garners friendships, lands contracts, makes sales happen, allows people to trust you; it is thus no small matter. Attitude is something that we control, that we can harness and, in a sense, much easier to get than an academic degree, yet it can be so much more invaluable. Attitude is a NV, probably the most subtle one we have to master. Where two people have the same skill set and experience, attitude makes the difference. No better way to wear a positive one by asking yourself - When you die, will a city erect a plaque in your name?
3. Smile. Business executives must make smiling a part of their repertoire, as a sine qua non for all employees dealing with the public. Smile humanizes social interaction. Never underestimate its power. This simple gesture can open opportunities, minds, hearts and good will. Imagine the ground staff of an airline which refuses to take of for hours giving smiles to stuck passengers and thus enabling them to fly those elusive miles to their destination while stranded at the airport itself and not complaining

### **THE POWER OF POSTURE AND STANCE**

Your posture and stance, which can be observed from quite a distance, can communicate weakness or authority, confrontation or cooperation, indifference or concern, boredom or readiness as well as restlessness or contentment. Your stance can help to dominate a situation or defuse it, simply by how you stand and where you place your feet. It can demonstrate vitality, eagerness and capability, or it can show lack of enthusiasm, illness or incompetence. The least one can do with one's stance is that one doesn't appear to be listless and boring. Use your body as a dynamic tool to develop immediate connectedness.

### **THE POWER OF MOVEMENT**

How quickly, effectively and smoothly you move makes a big difference in how you are perceived. Slowness translates into intangible losses; missed opportunities bungled marketing initiatives, tardy

product launches, accounting errors, poor service, late arrivals or deliveries and other costly mistakes. Ineptitude is not fair to the employer, to the other employees, and - most importantly to the customers. Spread is often intertwined with attitude.

Moving others: Our movements have powerful effects on others either to impress and motivate or to depress and demoralize. Rather than hide, leaders should be visible during crisis, using the power of their movements to move others. Smooth movements instill confidence, respect and trust.

### **THE POWER OF VOICE**

It may seem paradoxical, but there are NVs of the voice. Why do news casters sound so similar? Because they're trying to mirror a deep mellifluous voice. We should work on neutral tone and not high whining or like a "Valley Girl". The lower and deeper the voice, the better. Research shows that when we don't like someone's voice we tend to tune them out or ignore them completely. Most people think that power comes from loud words, screaming or shouting. It doesn't. It means you have lost control. A few suggestions to take charge of your voice:

- Practice Verbal Mirroring. If they say "my kids," you don't have to say "your children".
- Pauses and Silence are powerful. As Mark Twain once admonished, "It's better to keep your mouth shut and appear stupid than to open and remove all doubt."
- Speech hesitations are not the same as pauses. 'Um' 'ah' and throat clearings signal a lack of confidence and waste time of both the communicators.
- Eloquence inspires. Wait a minute; isn't eloquence a verbal? No, words are verbal; eloquence is how we speak and that is NV. One of the things that got Barak Obama elected was his eloquence, as it resonated in all Americans.

### **THE POWER OF HABITS**

Most of our habits are NV and they cannot a lot. Any work ritual you have (when you arrive, eat lunch, how long you take, what time you leave and so on) quickly becomes a matter or record. Old habits die hard and those who were marginal then, are marginal now because they never developed a work ethic for success. NVs are a matter of constant learning and practicing in a given situation/scenario and not permitted to be drifted lest they become habits and you pay the penalty for them.

To be seen as a leader, you need to be seen. Leadership, as we all know, differs from management. To lead means to take risks, to be in

the forefront to demonstrate emotional stability in the face of adversity, to rouse emotions powerfully to lead the way. This can be done Non Verbally by being there" for your employees - literally.

Leaders use NV communication. to fortify their verbal message and to create a visual image that stirs us all the time. When we think of powerful NVs of the WW II, what do we see? Winston Churchill (then in his 60s) mustering the will of the English people by showing control and confidence in adversity; Eisenhower talking to the paratroopers; Patton waving the tanks forwards; McArthur walking on the beaches. Their visibility at the helm inspired their troops and encouraged their countrymen back at home. If you want to be a leader, lead and be visible. Don't hide in your office (as Gen Yahya Khan did to Gen AAK Niazi during 1971 Indo Pak operations. Walk the floor and talk to your staff.

### **MANNERS ARE POWERFUL NON VERBALS**

Manners are in fact the glue. From Greek root 'Kola', meaning glue that holds a diverse group together. The way one expresses/verbalizes the words 'Please', 'Thank You', 'I am Sorry', 'I beg your pardon' etc harmonize/mend about to be broken/broken relationships.

### **THE COMPANY YOU KEEP: A NV YOU MAY NOT HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT**

Bear in mind that there are basically two kinds of people in this world: those who fill your cup and those who drain it. Be aware of people who seek your friendship, but at the end of the day sap you of your energy, thoughts and your performance; they are draining you.

Thus, there is power in realizing that how others perceive and deal with us is dependent on us, and not them. Only we can control how we are perceived. If you demonstrate only performance, you'll be one of many competent employees, but if you demonstrate the NVs of business success, you will be recognized as exceptional and it embraces everything from your attitude to your appearance.

### **THE POWER OF HOW YOU LOOK**

The Beauty Dividend. It's no secret that the premium on beauty and good looks dominates our media and marketing and even shapes the landscape of politics and power (e.g. Televised debates in US during elections). But what about business? Does beauty matter? Researches have shown that people who are good looking tend to be hired more frequently, receive more raises and, on an average, earn 10-15% more than their counterparts.

Some say that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but the research assures us that our preference for beauty is in our genetic make up, which is why babies will stare at a beautiful face longer than at an ugly one. In all cultures, beauty is sought, enhanced (through make up or adornments) and in some way rewarded.

The Beauty Dividend is not Destiny. Does that mean that we all need to look like George Clooney or Aishwaria Rai Bachan or be fated to failure - Yes and No. It is nice to be naturally good looking, but here is a big secret. All of us can be mindful of our grooming and attentive to how we present ourselves. One can overcome potential disadvantages such as shortness or physical impairment with charm, charisma, will and positive mind set. Short people who are charismatic or who have a compelling physical presence - such as celebrities and dancers - are always rated as being taller than they actually are. This is the singular "beauty" of NVs. We can use them to place attention where we want it, on our strengths and skills. So, play to your Strengths.

### **CLOTHING SPEAKS VOLUMES**

Image is mainly NV and it speaks to us daily. We have a choice every day to dress for ourselves or for others. They'll arrive at conclusions through your dressing sense about your status, economic level, education, trustworthiness, sophistication, background, and level of conventionality or unconventionality. It's nice to see everyone smartly dressed. This message of elegance and pride uplifts employees and employers alike:

- Dress for the Setting. The impact you want to make on a particular occasion; be it a Board Meeting or a concluding dinner or a B'day Party etc.
- Dress for Respect. Yours and theirs. Dress to mirror, not to shock. Meeting a client, dress as he or she does and not to outshine.

The Slippery Slope of Casual Dress. A common dress code reinforces professionalism and harmony, which are appealing both internally and externally. Moreover, business is not playtime. When standards are relaxed, it can be difficult to reset the boundaries. Casualness can kill credibility. Also, casualness in dress has a way of transmuting into a relaxation of attitudes. When the contexts of business and pleasure are mixed, behavior becomes mixed as well. What we wear, thus, shapes our behavior and prepares our body and mind for what we need to do. In the work place, you put on the attire of the warrior for business and that's your persona.

## **CURB SIDE APPEAL : MANAGING HOW YOUR ORGANISATION IS PERCEIVED**

Just as we form thin slice assessments of people, so do we of business and institutions. When we interact with business, just as we do with people, we are constantly assessing whether or not we feel comfortable, beginning in the first seconds of the first encounter and in each encounter there after. That is why it is critical to manage what our business or enterprise is communicating to the public. The consequences of failing to manage customer satisfaction are more severe today than ever.

Just as a smile can change our curbside appeal, so there are other simple things you can do to improve your company's curbside appeal:

- The comfort Dividend over competitive edge. Comfort is attractive in the same way as our favorite chair appeals to us. How comfortable is the work place for the employees and how much they enjoy working for long hours without any discomfort speaks volumes of the organization taking care of its people.
- Curbside appeal - A Pop Quiz :- How is your Company Reception Desk? Company's website?

Walk through your workplace and observe glasses, furniture, lighting, break room, bulletin /notice board etc

Are Window kept clean? Is the paint fresh? Are lights on and off when not required?

- Comfort Message:- Is the employees motto 'Meeting Your Need is My Most Important Responsibility'; 'Your Comfort is Our Job'; 'We Care about Your Safety'; 'What You Want and Need is Our Priority'; 'We're Glad You are Here'?
- Is there a Person who says hello?
- The Virtual Curb (Your Web site)
- Showing that you mean business

Properly conceived and executed, curbside appeal, as given in the 'Quiz' above, goes beyond coats of paints and curtains. It gets people in the door, keeps them in and makes them emotionally interested in their experience. What is to be instilled in every employee's mind is 'We are there to enrich customer experience, and in doing so we stand to gain'.

## **SITUATIONAL NONVERBALS: BEST PRACTICES FOR BEST RESULTS**

- Greetings and Introductions. This is where first bonds of trust are established, and so it is no small matter.

- Approaching Men Versus approaching women.
- Our first Touch
- Our personal Space. Edward Hall, the anthropologist, has coined the tem 'Proxemics' to describe this intangible yet defined, bubble of space each of us needs.
- Meetings by Design. The While House - more formal and "Camp David" - US President's Retreat - more informal and amiable.
- Set your goals and then set the mood.
- Set the stage.
- Turn on your NV Radar. Remember that NV info will be constantly flowing. Use it to your advantage.
- Use seating strategically.
- Use time efficiently and cue others to do the same.
- Those who attend also have a role. Don't ever neglect them. Your and Company's reputation may be on stake.
- When things get tense, take a timely action. Tension and acrimony achieve nothing. If you feel that tension is rising, take a moment to address it, because emotions will always override logic. Lower the temperature thro some NVs in any discussion.

## **MAKING THE CONNECTION: PHONE NON VERBALS**

Phone NVs can be telling. Since people know they can't be observed, they think one can not read them. When you hear vocal hesitations or pacifiers, you might circle back to the topic that was under discussion and put two and two together. One has to be only a good listener, therefore, and not just hearing while on the phone. Practitioners of NVs immediately catch on to the unspoken message.

## **POTENTIATING YOUR MESSAGE**

Messages can be magnified unforgettably by speakers choosing wisely when these messages are delivered. A ball room, a hotel and an assembly hall - all will have a different reasoning impact. Create an aura around you that anticipates your arrival, augments your presence, and favorably lingers after your departure. It is powerful when your NV message and Verbal message are unified and synchronous.

## **EMOTIONAL NON VERBALS**

Non Verbal awareness can help us bring more sensitively to the world around us. Although we like to think that rationally prevails, emotions are always operative at the work place. What do you remember at the end of a workday? Certainly you remember

what you accomplished, but what indelibly fixes those images/ events in your memory is how you felt about them: the surges of triumphs, the flashes of anger, the prickly sensation of anxiety; the sting of embarrassment.

While we like to think our personal and professional lives are separate, their emotions overlap and intersect. A few suggestions given by the researchers in the field are worth their while:

- Emotions always override logic.
- Address Honest Emotions Compassionately, but don't indulge them (same your drama for your mains).
- First recognize Emotions.
- Let NVs speak for you (A touch to heal, a smile to initiate, a raised eyebrow to exhibit disbelief etc. Create some respectable distance while conversing in the office, never say 'Clam Down' rather say 'Lets talk about it; tell me what you are thinking.' Let them 'Vent').
- Practice tools for preventing Emotional Short Circuiting (Be counter intuitive - don't hunker down or retreat, charge head on. Accept that Limbic Challenges will happen.
- Engage in disaster planning for emotions.
- Humor and Fun are NVs.

#### **WHAT ABOUT DECEPTION?**

Liars know what to say, but they usually aren't aware of the emotion that goes with the lie. They forget about emphasis, gravity defying behaviors and all the other NVs that we have discussed that show enthusiasm and confidence. If you are dealing with someone who is trying to win your money and you see NVs of excitement only when you are discussing and signing on the dotted line, I would be very concerned. I would want this person to be excited about answering all my questions, without hesitation, reservation or obfuscation.

Liars are usually troubled by three things: One, hearing a question they don't like; two, processing that question and coming up with a suitable answer and three, answering that question (the act of vocalizing). If you see discomfort in any of these areas on the part of someone who wants something from you, I would suggest backing away and saying "Give me a day to think about it." If they say that you have to decide now, then you definitely want to get out of these, because this is the tactic of a predator. Discomfort displays are the universal ways by which we sense and communicate negative emotions. If your questions are eliciting these kinds of displays of responses, be glad that your NV Intelligence is fully

operational and proving its value in your life.

Watch and Listen (Putting the comfort / discomfort Paradigm to work)

Remember that when working with NVs, you are watching for sudden changes in baseline behaviors with calm observation and attunement. You'll see and hear them as a revealing sub text in real time interactions with coworkers and clients. Here's a check list of key NVs of discomfort:

- Eyes blinking rapidly or touching eyes or brow
- Tucked chin (lack of confidence)
- Lip biting (anxiety)
- Clothing adjustments (adjusting collar or tie - ventilating behavior)
- Rubbing or cradling (self soothing behavior such as leg cleansing)
- Hands that disappear or grip chair arms (freeze response)
- Unconvincing half shrugs
- Leg crossing to block you out
- Hesitant or uninflected speech
- Cleaning of throat
- Nervous quiver or weak voice

#### **Gathering All Thoughts**

However, no matter how much you study this topic; there is always so much to learn, because life and people are so nuanced and diverse that one can never absolutely know the truth. And in some ways truth is beside the point. The real point in business is to achieve success by solving problems and improving relationships for these goals. NV intelligence is a powerful ally. It is like "uncorking a huge reservoir of information about life that previously had been hidden or is probably lying beneath like an ice bug"

The beauty of NV intelligence is that it is the great equalizer. Knowledge of it is power. You don't have to be rich or highly educated to employ it. NV intelligence is available to all and it speaks a common language that everyone understands - one that will distinguish you from others. In a way, it is like good manners. Getting it right won't automatically guarantee you success, but getting it wrong will definitely undermine you. With it, life becomes more meaningful because so much what goes on around us will stand out with clarity.

**Go ahead and be a student of it life long!**