





A felsőfokú oktatás minőségének és  
hozzáférhetőségének együttes javítása a  
Pannon Egyetemen

EFOP-3.4.3-16-2016-00009



**Edit Kővári Ph.D.**  
**Introduction to Business Communication**  
**Coursebook**

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Introduction to Business Communication

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## Preface

### Plan of the book

This university book is written to be the base for mainly undergraduate university students attending the Business Communication course. The chapters apart from introducing the basic aspects of business communication explore the most relevant areas of the 21<sup>st</sup> century which are essential to be able to communicate in a professional way.

Each chapter ends with self-check questions to help individual study. Furthermore, there is an assignment or project work at the end of each section to enable practicing and trying out the theories in real business context and trigger individual, pair and team work.

The following sections in the chapters are indicated by the following symbols:



***Learning Outcomes*** This section leads into the chapter topic by providing the relevant key elements.



***Exercises*** This section helps to absorb the explained theories and link them with practices.



***Project and Assignment*** This section gives you extra help to contemplate and act on thought-provoking ideas.

The understanding of each item is made easier by colourful tables, charts, figures and pictures. Furthermore, definitions are emphasised separately. Those who are interested in reading more about the topics would find a separate reference and reading part for each chapter at the end of the book.

I hope You find this book useful and beneficial.

*Edit Kővári*

## Chapter 1 - Basic aspects of business communication



### *Learning Outcomes*

When finishing this chapter, you should be able to:

- ✓ define the concept of communication
- ✓ understand the process of business communication
- ✓ identify the elements of professional business communication

### *Introduction*

#### **Communication in business and personal life in the 21st century**

The 20th century brought us digitalisation and Internet, and the 21st century surprised everyone with the speed of the information spread via social media. There is no escape from communication as humans are built psychologically and socially to interact with each other. During your private and work life you will interact with people from a variety of cultures, people who differ in race, age, gender, sexual orientation, national and regional attitudes and beliefs, family structure, religion, native language, physical and cognitive abilities, life experience, and educational background. These aspects have an effect on the way people express themselves and receive information.

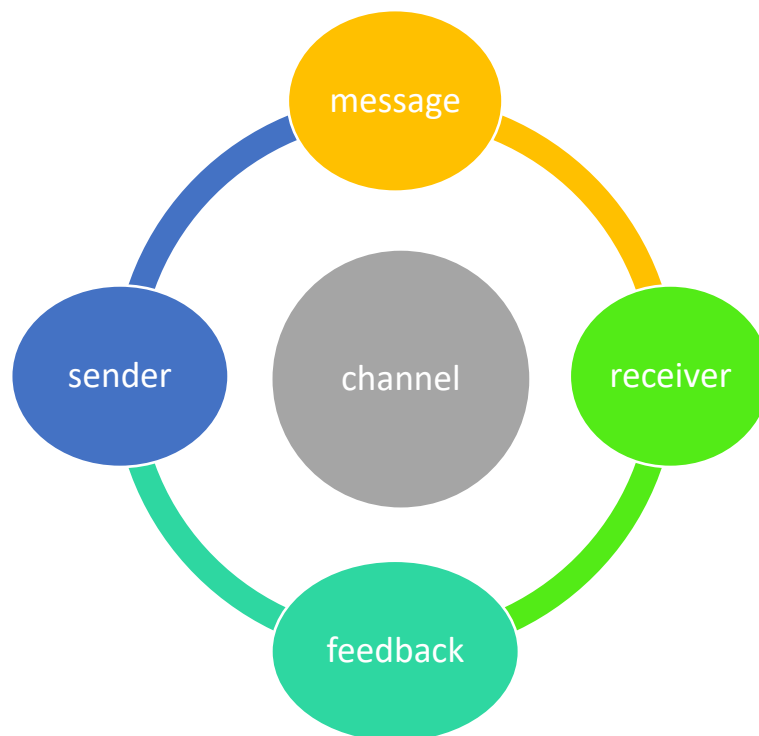
#### **The definition of communication**

The etymology of the word 'communication' originates from the Latin 'communio' and 'communitas' nouns which mean community. The verb 'communico' means speak, talk and share. "*Any real theory of communication is the theory of community*" said Williams as people can only live a full and true life in communication. The theory of communication lies between the empirical and interpretative sciences covering mainly the following areas: cybernetics, semiotics, rhetoric, socio-psychology, phenomenology, social criticism and socio-cultural aspects. According to the infocommunication-cybernetics approach communication is transferring information regardless of the code system (so it can be numbers as well). In a

technical sense communication is information flow in a man-made technical system, this is what we experience vividly today. Biologically communication means that all species have a physical and chemical sign system through which they interact. The human being is the only sign creator creature. Socio-communication is information changing between people through mass communication, which includes behaviour norms, roles, etiquettes, traditions etc.

### **The process of communication**

Communication is the process of transferring information and meaning between senders and receivers applying one or more types of media such as print, oral, visual, or digital. The message in the communication is the coded information which gets from the sender to the receiver through a channel (e.g. air). The receiver decodes the information and reacts to that either verbally or nonverbally, which is the feedback to the sender. Silence is also a reaction and feedback. See the communication process in Figure 1.1.



**Figure 1.1. The process of communication**



The essence of communication is sharing—providing data, information, insights, and inspiration in an exchange that benefits both you and the people with whom you are communicating. This sharing (between people) can happen in 3 main ways: *transmitted*, *negotiated* and *re-created* meaning.

*Transmitted meaning* is when the sender sends an information that is noted and accepted by the receiver. For example (Figure 1.2a):



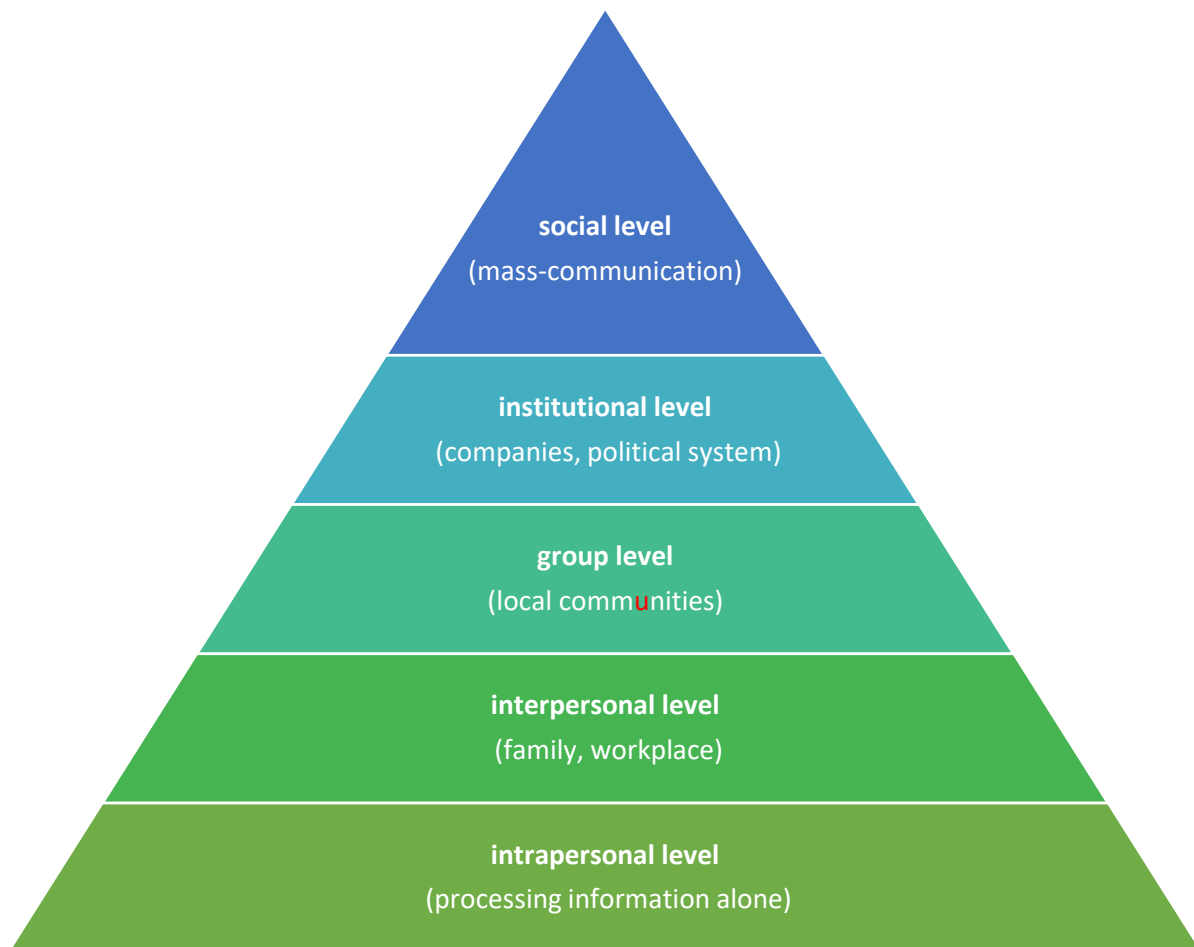
*Negotiated meaning* is when the receiver acknowledges what the sender said but perhaps needs to know more information or there might be some comments on the message. For example (Figure 1.2b):



*Re-created meaning* is when the receiver by understanding the sender message translates it into his/her own language and decodes the meaning (Figure 1.2c).



The communication process in the society can be presented in a hierarchical system whose layers build upon each other (Figure 1.3.). Naturally the levels are integrated with organisational and intercultural communication, which is discussed later in this book. There are several ways when the message or the feedback is misunderstood. Either because of misinterpretations based on the individual knowledge, experience, physical or psychological health or if the channel is broken. Other reasons are the filters (technological or human intervention during talks) when the message is blocked or distorted, or there can be competing messages that draws away the sender's or the receiver's attention (competing for the other's attention). You can minimize these barriers if you are aware of them and as business life is bursting, you need techniques to prevent misunderstanding and breakdowns.



**Figure 1.3. Communication process in the society**

Bearing in mind the different levels, it is important to differentiate communication according to the number of participants in the process.

- *Intrapersonal communication* is usually “talking to oneself”, when the flow of information coming from the outside meets our inner thoughts, memories and experiences. This interaction is a kind of inner debate, which is usually preceded by a decision making process.
- *Interpersonal communication* involves at least 2 people (the sender and the receiver, who constantly change their roles). This is an active interaction either face-to-face or via other channels (e.g. chat, e-mail).
- *Group communication* is where 3 or more people interact. There are different types of groups according to the numbers. A small group is between 3-10 people; a medium group is between 11-24 people; a large group is between 25-80 people, and above 80

we talk about crowd and mass. However, the latter is not really considered a group as it has no purpose.

- *Institutional level of communication* appears at public (e.g. university) and private (e.g. company) organisations where communication is organised and follows a structured policy (e.g. chain of command) as well as an unstructured way of information change (e.g. gossip).
- *Social level of communication* simply refers to how language is used in social situations. It involves area that tells us when and with whom to apply formal and informal communication or vertical and horizontal communication at a company. In social communication two (or more) people could interact without communication (e.g. because of different languages).

Business communication is an institutionalized personal communication within social communication. To see it more clearly, social communication can be categorized according to the following dimensions: institutionalized and non-institutionalized; personal and mass communication. Figure 1.4. illustrates these categories with examples.

	<i>Personal communication</i>	<i>Mass-communication</i>
<b>Institutionalized</b>	meeting at the workplace, official letter, e-mail	radio, TV, newspaper
<b>Non- institutionalized</b>	gossip, viber message from friends	vlogs, personalised youtube channel

**Figure 1.4. The framework of social communication**

### **The elements of professional business communication**

Communication is important to understand and to be understood at all levels and it is inevitably vital for your business career. To make your communication efforts as effective as possible, focus on making them practical, factual, concise, clear, and persuasive. Therefore, the following advice needs to be considered:

- 1 *Provide practical information.* Give recipients useful information.
- 2 *Give facts rather than vague impressions.* Use concrete language, specific detail, and information that is clear, convincing, accurate, and ethical. Even when an opinion is called for, present compelling evidence to support your conclusion.
- 3 *Present information in a concise, efficient manner.* Concise messages show respect for people's time, and they increase the chances of a positive response.
- 4 *Clarify expectations and responsibilities.* Craft messages to generate a specific response from a specific audience. When appropriate, clearly state what you expect from audience members or what you can do for them.
- 5 *Offer compelling, persuasive arguments and recommendations.* Show your readers precisely how they will benefit by responding the way you want them to respond to your message.

In business excellent communication is vital, but only those who master communication at a professional level can reach long-term personal and financial satisfaction. In order to master professionalism there are some basic concepts which need to be mastered (Figure 1.5). First you need to be clear in your message so as not to be misunderstood. Secondly, follow the business etiquette, by which you respect yourself and the listener(s) and express this in the way you talk. Thirdly, be ethical and do not apply hidden manipulation and when facing ethical dilemmas express your pros and cons clearly and directly visibly. Fourth, you need to be coherent, that is keep your words and promises and if you make mistakes admit them, take the responsibility, apologize and correct them. The fifth element is being authentic. This means you need to have a background knowledge and to be an expert of what you are talking about. For that do not overgeneralise but work with the facts that are connected to each other. The sixth thing is to be a team-player, know your communicational role and style which best fits the team members in order to make the outcome quick and effective. All in all, to be the best means you are a pro-active speaker and an active listener at the same time, who knows and applies the written and unwritten rules of the professional business communication.



**Figure 1.5. Professional business communication items**



### Self-check and exercises

1. How would you define the essence of (business) communication?
2. Name some barriers that can lead to misunderstanding. How can you prevent these?
3. Do a personal analysis to see what elements you already have and what characteristics need to be improved to be a professional business communicator.



### Projects and assignments

Listen to the following TED video where Celeste Headlee talks about the *10 ways to have a better conversation*:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/celeste\\_headlee\\_10\\_ways\\_to\\_have\\_a\\_better\\_conversation/transcript#t-177333](https://www.ted.com/talks/celeste_headlee_10_ways_to_have_a_better_conversation/transcript#t-177333)

1. Write down the 10 ways how you can improve the conversation and then make a self-check of each considering the level you have or apply these elements in your communication.
2. Which do you think you have to develop in order to improve your communication skills?
3. In what way can you link the 10 ways you heard to the professional elements illustrated in Figure 5?

## Chapter 2 - Verbal and nonverbal business communication



### Learning Outcomes

When finishing this chapter, you should be able to:

- define verbal and nonverbal communication
- understand the four-side model
- recognize what makes verbal and nonverbal communication effective
- learn the etiquettes of business communication

### Introduction

Language has primarily four main functions. First, it is the most important medium for people to communicate. Secondly it is the way to express our identification and place in the society. Thirdly it is the way to express our intellectual development as we grow: children learn through reflecting the world and adults express their concepts and thoughts as they experience the world. The latter case is nearly always accompanied by action.

All forms of communication can be grouped into these two categories: verbal or nonverbal. The codes we apply during our face-to-face communication can be put into one of the five primary systems of communication: verbal, prosodic, paralinguistic, kinesics and standing features. Figure 2.1. illustrates these elements in details.

verbal	• words, clauses and sentences <b>which delete</b> we use in speech and writing
prosodic	• all the stress and pitch patterns, such as pauses and intonation used <b>d</b> in speech
paralinguistic	• all the pauses, ‘ums’, ‘ahs’ and other sounds which are not ‘real’ words and which do not have a clear linguistic function
kinesic	• all the ways we move our bodies during communication, including our posture, gestures and so on
standing features	• more static non-verbal features such as appearance and distance

Figure 2.1. Five primary systems of communication



The verbal and nonverbal code system together carries multiple meanings, which has four dimensions in the communication process (Figure 2.2). Messages contain four conveyed sub-messages at the same time regardless if it is conscious or unconscious.

1. *The factual information (blue): The sender states facts and data in order to inform the receiver. The receiver's factual ears check the relevance, sufficiency and the authenticity of the information.*
2. *The self-revealing statement (green): The sender conducts self-revealing expressions about him/herself (e.g. emotions, values) both verbally and nonverbally. The self-revealing ears of the receiver perceive the unconscious and hidden information about the sender whether it was intentionally or unintentionally proposed by the sender.*
3. *The relationship indicator (yellow): The sender expresses verbally or nonverbally what he/she thinks about the receiver and the relationship between them. The receiver's relationship ear either accepts or rejects the message from the sender depending on his/her personal interpretation and the intention to understand and not to misunderstand the senders' message. For an effective communication a common feeling of acceptance and esteem is vital.*
4. *The appeal (red): In this case the sender aim is to influence the receiver to do/undo, think or not-think of something. The message can come open (such as in the form of an advice) or hidden (this is manipulation). The appeal ears of the receiver can show hesitation consciously or unconsciously as whether to do the action or to reject it.*

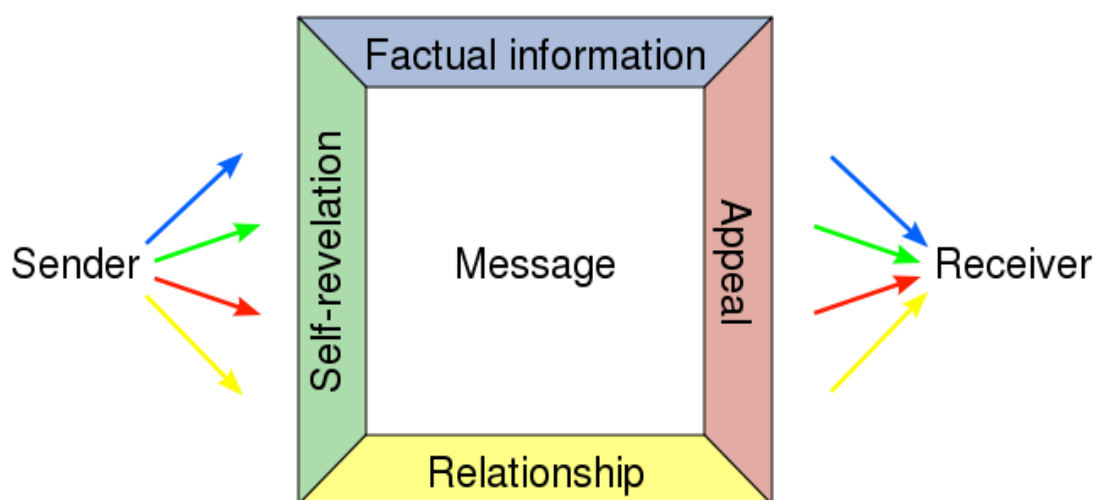


Figure 2.2 Four-side model - Schulz von Thun

(adopted from <https://blog.rwth-aachen.de/designthinking/files/2016/01/four-sides-model.png>)

As you can see there are several gaps which can lead speakers to misunderstanding as the sender' "mouth" and intention might not meet the receiver's "ears" and perception. Let's see how this works in business (Figure 2.3.):

<i>Sender</i>	<i>Say</i>	<i>Receiver</i>	<i>Think</i>
<b>Factual layer</b>	"The project report must be sent by 2 May."	<b>Factual layer</b>	The project report must be sent by 2 May.
<b>Self-revealing layer</b>	"I want everyone to be on time and make an immaculate report!" (angry tone)	<b>Self-revealing layer</b>	You want everyone to be on time and make an immaculate report, and it makes you angry as last time it did not happen that way.
<b>Relationship layer</b>	"You should know to who and what I'm talking about."	<b>Relationship layer</b>	You think my work is not perfect and on time.
<b>Appeal layer</b>	"Am I understood?!"	<b>Appeal layer</b>	I must do a better report and hand it in on time this time.

**Figure 2.3. Business example for the four-side model**

Obviously, the receiver experience, mood, personality etc. influence the understanding of the message and the reaction to it. Based on the four-side model we can distinguish four types of listeners. The *factual listener*, who focuses on the data and facts disregarding the other levels when perceiving the message. The *emphatic listener*, who mainly hears and interprets the message as words and signs and as self-revelation, therefore reacts to the sender's physical and emotional state. The *sensitive listener* reacts to the relationship level mostly, and reacts quickly, spontaneously and defensively if he/she feels offended. Finally, the *action-oriented listener* reacts primarily to the appeal layer by immediate action.

The cyclical way of sender and receiver conscious and unconscious communication is easily understood by the thought-feeling-behaviour circulation (Figure 2.4.)

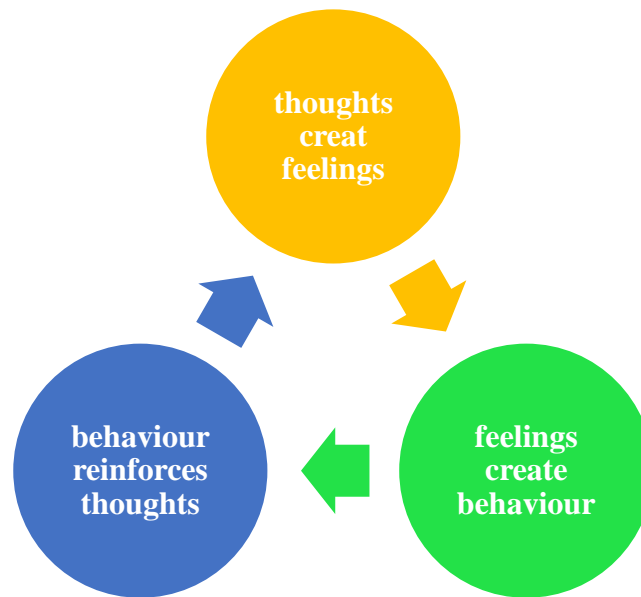


Figure 2.4. The cycle of thoughts, feelings and behaviour

### The effective verbal communication in business life

In order to have an effective verbal business communication we need to know who we talk to, what we are talking about, how, where and when we say things. It is vital to adopt ourselves to the **register** of the given business society and culture. Language register is the level of formality of the way we speak, so in different situations, and with diverse people we apply different registers. The register depends on cultures, sub-cultures, rank of the employees etc. Applying the appropriate register can depend on your IQ, social and emotional intelligence and the expression of your respect. *Lingo* is the term for using specific language especially the jargon, the slang of a particular field, group, or individual. An organisation can have its own lingo, which should be acquired by a new employee in order to understand and communicate well at the workplace.

The cooperative principle describes the effectiveness level achieved in a conversation in a social and business situation. Regarding the content of the message Grice (1975) described 4 basic principles of a successful conversation that we call *Grice maxims*: quantity, quality, relation and manner:

1. *The maxim of quantity*, where you try to be as informative as you can, and do not give more information than needed.

2. *The maxim of quality*, where you make an effort to be truthful, and do not give information that is false or that is not supported by evidence.
3. *The maxim of relation*, where you are relevant, and say things that are relating to the discussion.
4. *The maxim of manner*, when you try to be as clear, as brief, and as organised as possible to avoid obscurity and ambiguity.

There may be an overlap as regards the length of what someone says, between the maxims of quantity and manner. There is always a relationship between the content we wish to convey and the formulated sentences. The speaker wants to say something to have an impact on the receiver or to make the message well understood. However, it is also possible that according to the maxims the sentence conveys a meaning different from what is literally said, and this may result in sarcasm or irony.

The other thing that is essential in verbal communication is listening. It is believed that to be able to get things done at the workplace listening is the key. There are several types of listening, here we differentiate the four basic types of effective listening:

1. *Content listening* is focusing on understanding the message itself without any evaluation or judgement. For example, in business, when you introduce new principles, the employees are interested in the facts you are talking about..
2. *Critical listening* is when you evaluate the meaning of someone's message in several ways. You try to understand the motivation and the intention of the sender, and if you are sceptical you ask back to clear facts and feelings.
3. *Emphatic listening* is about understanding the speakers' feelings, wants and needs without interruption. You should avoid giving direct advice and be patient as the speaker might just want to share his/her feeling without any judgements.
4. *Active listening* is focusing on the others with shutting down our readiness to interrupt. During this type of listening, you should ask questions which encourage verbally or nonverbally the speaker to deepen the subject matter to find a common language.

One of the most common barriers of effective listening is *selective listening*. If you do not concentrate, your mind drifts away and misses the message. People think faster than they speak, so you usually focus on how to react to the sender's message and behaviour. This is an unconscious phenomenon but with determined mind you can overcome selectiveness. Nevertheless, selective listening can have a good side: you simply cannot process all

interactions during communication, so filtering can ease your brain. The following can help if you wish to store information into your long-term memory: write key words down; associate new information with an already existing and relatable one, categorize information into logical groups; try to visualize the heard information in pictures, create a memory hook with acronyms and rhymes.

### **Verbal metacommunication**

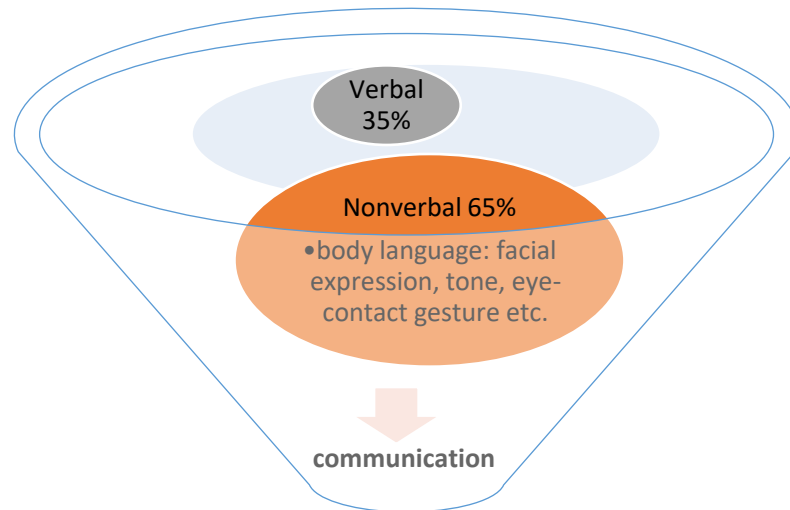
As it is known the successful effect of the face-to-face conversation is only 7%. Messages can be perceived *literally* and *non-literally*. While within literally meaning words have only one meaning, non-literal utterances have two meanings: word for word and transferred meaning. In this aspect transferred meaning has two types: style, such as metaphors and thought??? such as irony. *Cliché* is also a representative of verbal metacommunication. This is a stereotyped phrase mainly expressing a popular or common thought or idea that has lost originality. It can be an *overused expression* such as in business “Be honest” or an idea with a *different meaning from its literal meaning* such as “Think outside the box”. Also in this category we need to consider the 2 *meta expression phrases/expressions* such as, “OK, but”, or the *manipulating phrases* such as “Isn’t it true?”; and *persuasion* such as “I think we can all agree on this”. In business metalanguage is often applied especially during meetings and negotiation.

### **Nonverbal communication**

Nonverbal communication is sending and receiving information without speaking. Nonverbal signs usually strengthen communication but sometimes verbal and nonverbal signals do not match, which leads to miscommunication. For example, the project manager reassures the team in time/on time/about the time?, but with a fake smile or by raising his/her eyebrows.

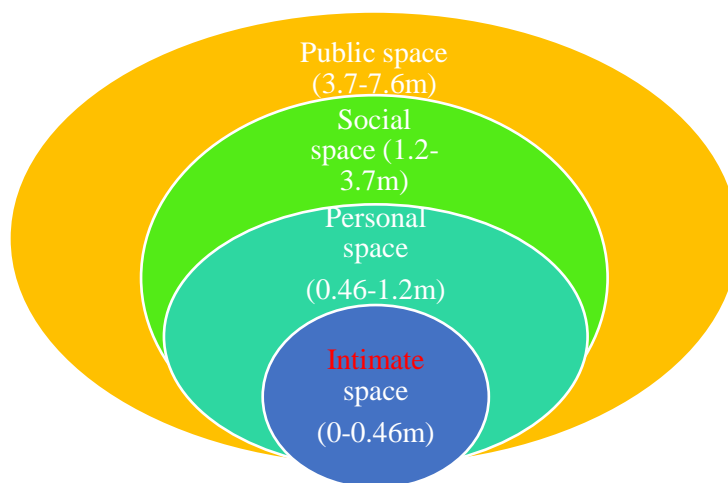
It might be surprising but nonverbal communication influences understanding or misunderstanding as it works through more senses than just the uttered words or sentences. Nonverbal communication includes facial expression, tone of the voice, body posture, movements, eye-contact, appearance, gestures and other body language element (Figure 2.5). It is a key to success in business communication if you know and use appropriately the elements of nonverbal communication. Among these there are six types of nonverbal elements, also called *proxemics*, which are particularly important:

1. *Facial expression*: this is your chief surface to reveal emotions. Face muscles unconsciously react to verbal and nonverbal interactions. Because mostly it is hard to control your feelings and people continuously watch especially your eyes and mouth during conversations, learning and improving the usage of your face expression is a key in business communication.
2. *Vocals*: Your voice carries messages that you transmit intentionally with the pitch or the speed of your voice or the stress (see the difference between: Are *you* at home so early? Or Are you at home *so early*? Unintentional vocal features transfer your emotions such as happiness, fear, anger, surprise etc.
3. *Gesture and body posture*: Voluntary and involuntary body movement express general and distinctive messages. Gestures such as waving, pointing with your finger is intentional and specific while leaning forward during a negotiation or standing with your shoulders up to ears are general and unconscious postures revealing your feelings.
4. *Touch*: The consequences of tapping someone on the arm for instance is influenced by the national, organisational and sub-culture as well as by the personality characteristics of the receiver and the situation. Hungarian people on average touch more than British people do, but less than the Italians. A manager has to be careful when using a hug to encourage someone not to be misunderstood while a handshake to introduce or close a deal is quite evident in European culture.
5. *Appearance*: One of the most conscious ways to express ourselves is appearance. We do dress up consciously to influence others or because it is a written or a hidden indication of the cultural acceptance. To make a good impression on the employer at a job interview you need to know the organisational principles, style and dress code. Some people do not wish to come up to the appearance expectation in order to rebel or shock, but there are some who just simply do not care as they wish to be judged by their action and personality not by the way they look.
6. *Time and space*: It can indicate authority and intimacy. Keeping the time also depends on culture and individual attitude. While it is not a problem to be late 10 minutes from a meeting in Brazil, it would be an insult in Germany. It is the same with private space. There are four main categories in space. The *intimate*, *personal*, *social* and *public*. Figure 2.6. illustrates the distances.



**Figure 2.5 Verbal and nonverbal communication ratio**

Developing the nonverbal elements of communication takes time and concentration but it is worth investing. Science keeps introducing fascinating research which challenges misbeliefs. For example, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century communication trainers declared that if someone does not look into your eyes he/she must be lying. Nowadays we know that people can lie while staring into the others' eyes without a blink or any nonverbal revealing signs. Keeping the eye contact also depends on the culture and on peoples' attitude, physical and psychological state.



**Figure 2.6 Space distances**

## Business communication etiquette

The mutual respect of your colleagues and people in general is very important. Etiquette is one of the most crucial jigsaws of business communication, which besides verbally and nonverbally aspects also includes behaviour and habits related to the workplace. There are several “rules” to come up to in business life but probably these are the most common:

1. *Firm handshake:* It is the way to greet each other properly regardless of the gender. Your handshake is strong but not aggressive and do not turn the hand downward to your partner. Two shakes are enough and avoid “fishy” handshake (when your hand is just in the others palm and slip out easily).
2. *Introduce yourself slowly and clearly:* Say your name loud and confidently and you can even add which name you prefer to be called, for example: “Hello, “My name is Jim Morrison, please call me Jim.”
3. *Introduce others:* When meeting a business partner while you are with a colleague, if you are uncertain that the people present know one another, make the introductions yourself. First say the name of the person with a higher rank regardless of the gender, like: “(Mr) Jim Morrison, I would like to introduce you to Ms Ellison Cooper”.”
4. *You should put your smartphone and I-devices away:* Unless it is needed for the conversation, when you have a business discussion (lunch and dinner are also included here) put away your mobile phone. If there is an urgent call to pick, go to a private place and ask to be excused. Be brief and return back to the business partner as soon as possible. Do not pick up the phone constantly. Wait with your phone calls and messages until a breaktime.
5. *Use the polite power words:* Words with impact always work on the business partner’s emotion. Use “Thank You”, “Please”, “You are welcome” often (but not too often) as a means of courtesy.
6. *Answer as soon as possible:* This is the hardest to keep for busy people, but try to answer e-mails within 24 hours. Try to allocate time for that, for example 20 minutes in the morning and before finishing your work. If you cannot answer complicated emails, at least let the sender know that you are working on it.
7. *Watch the door signs:* If you work in an office, you should apply the door policy to indicate whether you have time to chat or you are busy working. If you leave the door full open, this indicates that you are working on some easy task and colleagues can come in. If the door is just openajar, it shows that you are busy but if someone wishes to ask a quick



question he/she may come in. If the door is closed, this indicates that you deal with a very important task and should not be disturbed unless it is really urgent. In any case however it is advised to knock on the door regardless whether it is fully open or closed.

8. *Private conversations should not be heard*: Especially if you work in an open office, you should not discuss your private matters there, as your colleagues try to work. Although people are generally curious, they may be annoyed if they are disturbed in their job.

Technology is the main tool to communicate in business therefore it is important to consider the following suggestions how to apply business ethics through the following media (Figure 2.7):

<b>Phone</b>	<b>pay attention to the tone of your voice</b>
	do not answer when you talk to someone else
	focus and do not multitask: e.g. answering, being on your computer and eating at the same time)
	let the other person know if your phone is in speaker mode so others can hear your conversation too
<b>E-mail</b>	have a professional e-mail address (not like ladybird@...)
	use appropriate style: formal or informal (Dear Ms Smith/Dear Samantha/Hi Jack)
	be aware of your spelling (have spellcheck on)
	before answering to all or forwarding make sure you really want to involve everyone in your reply (and if yes, what is the purpose)
	be careful with humour with those you do not know well, it might seem insulting or sarcastic
<b>Messaging and chatting</b>	be brief and stick to the point
	do not gossip
	never send bad or vague news
<b>Texting</b>	pay attention to abbreviation, it might not be understood
	use it in urgent situation, but not to cancel or change set meetings (phone is better)
<b>Skype</b>	look into the camera as people seek eye-contact as it is a live chat
	try to be natural, do not gesture, move or speak too much
	do not have the sun or window behind, as light cannot make your face visible; a too dark room is avoidable for the same reason
	dress up and look like a professional to give respect

**Figure 2.7 Some communication etiquettes using technology**

Applying emojis in business communication does not have a long history and proper rules but there are some phenomena to consider. If you already have an established relationship in written or oral communication with the receiver (co-worker, business partner etc.) you can use emojis but do not overuse them. The message should be clear and words are a priority even if it is only a short message. The basic emojis have universal meaning but there are some complex ones which could be misunderstood (see and compare the two emojis in Figure 2.8.)



Meaning: "I have an idea!"



Meaning is versatile can be: "You have a cool beard" or "Interesting and strange" etc.

**Figure 2.8 Simple and complex emojis**

You should avoid applying emojis with prospective clients or with anyone you are emailing for the first time, as this does not look at all professional. To apologise for a serious mistake or misunderstanding emojis are not the most appropriate way in business to plead for forgiveness. It is not the way to "repair" a business relationship either. However nowadays when the borderline between everyday- and business communication is fading these rules are not that strict, especially when colleagues become friends outside the workplace and when business partners have had a long relationship. As sentences and messages shorten and pictures and abbreviation sneak in business communication, we do not know whether in a

couple of years' time emojis strengthen or weaken the communication gaps and misunderstanding.



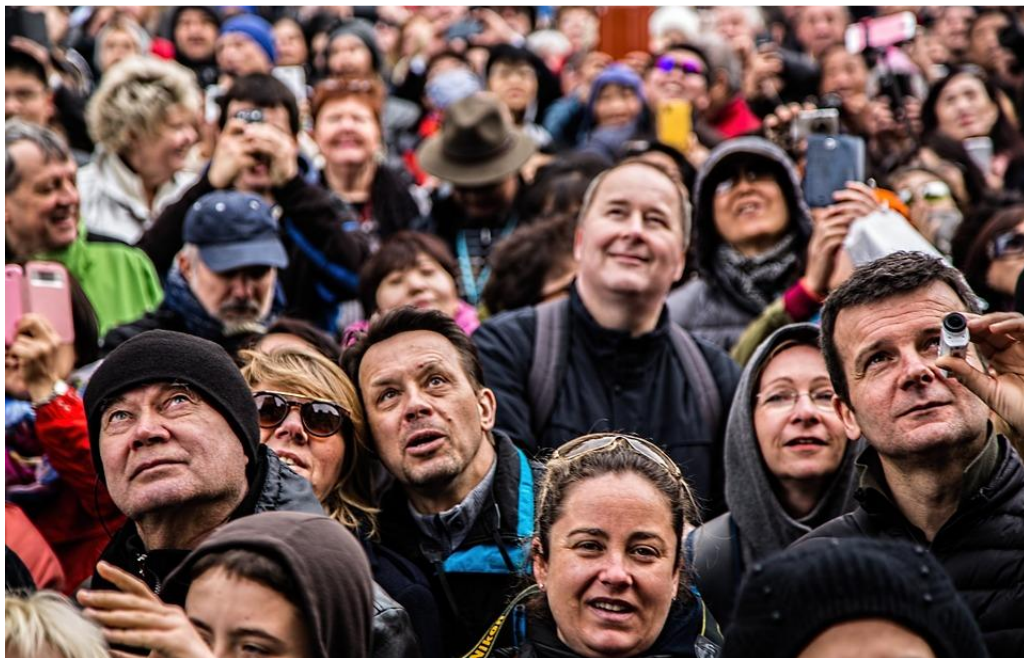
### **Self-check and exercises**

4. Explain the 5 primary systems of communication and give examples for each.
5. Which is the most problematic layer in the four-side model in your opinion?
6. How does the maxim of relation in Grice maxims appear in your (working) life? Explain it with an example.
7. Think about your everyday life and give an example when your space distances were not kept. What was the reason?
8. Try out your handshake on 4 different types of people (who differ in age, gender, status etc.) then analyse whether your handshake has changed or was the same with all 4. How were their handshakes? Which one did you “like” the best or the least? Why?
9. Look at one of your typical day messages (FB, Viber, text etc.). Count how many and how many different types of emojis you have used Do you use these regularly or you pick up new ones each week?



### Projects and assignments

4. Look at the picture below and try to identify nonverbal elements on the people's face. What do you think they are watching? What is happening at the moment?
5. Find a webpage of a well-known company in your country. Look at the power words, colors, pictures, design of the website. Analyze the site according to Grice maxims.



## Chapter 3 - Emotional Intelligence in Business Communication



### *Learning Outcomes*

When finishing this chapter, you should be able to:

- define the concept of emotional intelligence
- make distinctions between emotion, feeling, mood and attitude
- learn the traits of emotional intelligence
- code the emotions from people's faces
- identify the communicational competences of an emotionally intelligent person

### *Introduction*

“A picture is worth a thousand words” goes the saying and it is scientifically true. There are some facts that research works have already proved. Based on this we can state that 80% of the brain is visually based which means that we process, create and attach the information to images. As we could read in Chapter 2 most of the communication takes place nonverbally, therefore we rely on nonverbal facial expressions to process and evaluate the sender's message. To read and respond well to someone's emotions you need to know about and develop your emotional intelligence.

### **The concept of emotional intelligence**

Intelligence has diverse segments such as verbal-linguistic, mathematical-logical, visual-spatial, musical, kinaesthetic (bodily), interpersonal (learning from interacting with others), intrapersonal (learning through our own emotions and feelings) etc. Emotional intelligence is one of the segments of the complex intelligence.

The concept of emotional intelligence appeared in business life in 1990s impending from the field of psychology. There are several ways to define it, but in one simple sentence, it is to understand your and others' emotions and the way you react to these emotions. The notion of emotion is usually described as a strong personal feeling triggered by actions and moods of others or by circumstances. There are viewpoints that the core components of emotions such as anger, fear, happiness, sadness and disgust are biologically given and culture independent. These fundamental emotions are visible (facial expression and body language), which incites other people to react to them unconsciously (with a kind of natural gut-reaction ) or

consciously (considering the best way to react, which is the base of trait emotional intelligence).

Emotional intelligence consists of competences that include traits and abilities which have two aspects: understanding individuals' own emotions, intentions, responses and behaviour patterns; and understanding others' emotions, intentions, responses and behaviour patterns. The four emotional intelligence elements can be grouped into two phases: *personal competences* and *social competencies*. Self-awareness and self-management belong to the personal competence phase while social awareness and relationship management are two elements of social competence.

The term emotion is generally interchangeably used for feelings, moods and affection?. In order to distinguish the concept of emotion from the other terms and clear misunderstandings there are six components under the discipline of affective sciences within which emotion belongs to (Figure 3.1).

Emotional intelligence is regarded as a set of competences that can be learnt and transformed into different social circumstances such as people's workplace. Effective managers must have an emotional leadership role as leadership works through emotions.

There are traits (Figure 3.2) within emotional intelligence that managers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are advised to master in order to communicate and lead successfully.

**emotion**

a rather short event of brain coordination where automatic and behavioural changes happen to respond to the external and internal occurrence judged significant by the brain

**feeling**

the subjective representation of emotions; representation of emotions )

**mood**

a pervasive affective phase, which is usually lower in intensity than emotion, but significantly longer in duration

**attitude**

relatively stable beliefs, preferences and propensities concerning people and objects

**affective style**

a stable inclination that influences a person in a way to perceive and respond with **an** emotional dimension or mood to other people and objects

**temperament**

affective styles appearing in the early stages of a person's life therefore it is believed to be determined by genetic factors

**Figure 3.1 Six components of affective science**



EQ facets	DESCRIPTIONS
<b>WELL-BEING</b> <b>individuals' positivity, fulfilment and happiness</b>	
<b>optimism</b>	confidence to see things positively, the “glass is half full” attitude
<b>happiness</b>	pleasant emotional stage in the present
<b>self-esteem</b>	feel self-confident and personal success
<b>SOCIABILITY</b> <b>relationships development, social settings and networking</b>	
<b>emotional management</b>	influence and deal with other people's feelings
<b>assertiveness</b>	compliance to stand up for individuals' own rights
<b>social awareness</b>	have social skills and ability to network
<b>EMOTIONALITY</b> <b>ability to recognise people's emotional states, express emotions and develop and keep close relationship with others</b>	
<b>empathy</b>	take others' perceptive, <b>this does not make sense</b> truly understand and imagine deep personal feelings of others
<b>emotional perception</b>	awareness of others' feelings
<b>emotional expression</b>	the ability to communicate one's feeling to others
<b>relationships</b>	creating contacts and keeping and fulfilling personal relationships
<b>SELF-CONTROL</b> <b>control over feelings, coping with pressure and stress</b>	
<b>emotion regulation</b>	control over own feelings and emotional state

<b>impulsiveness (low)</b>	the likelihood to suppress basic instincts and urges
<b>stress management</b>	ability to overcome stress and withstand pressure
<b>adaptability</b>	flexibility to adjust to new situations
<b>self motivation</b>	inner driving force to perform an action

Figure 3.2 Trait Emotional Intelligence facets (adopted from own PhD **thesis**)

Apart from the above mentioned (Figure 3.2) facets in relation to business communication there are other competences which are crucial, however the list can never be complete (Figure 3.3).

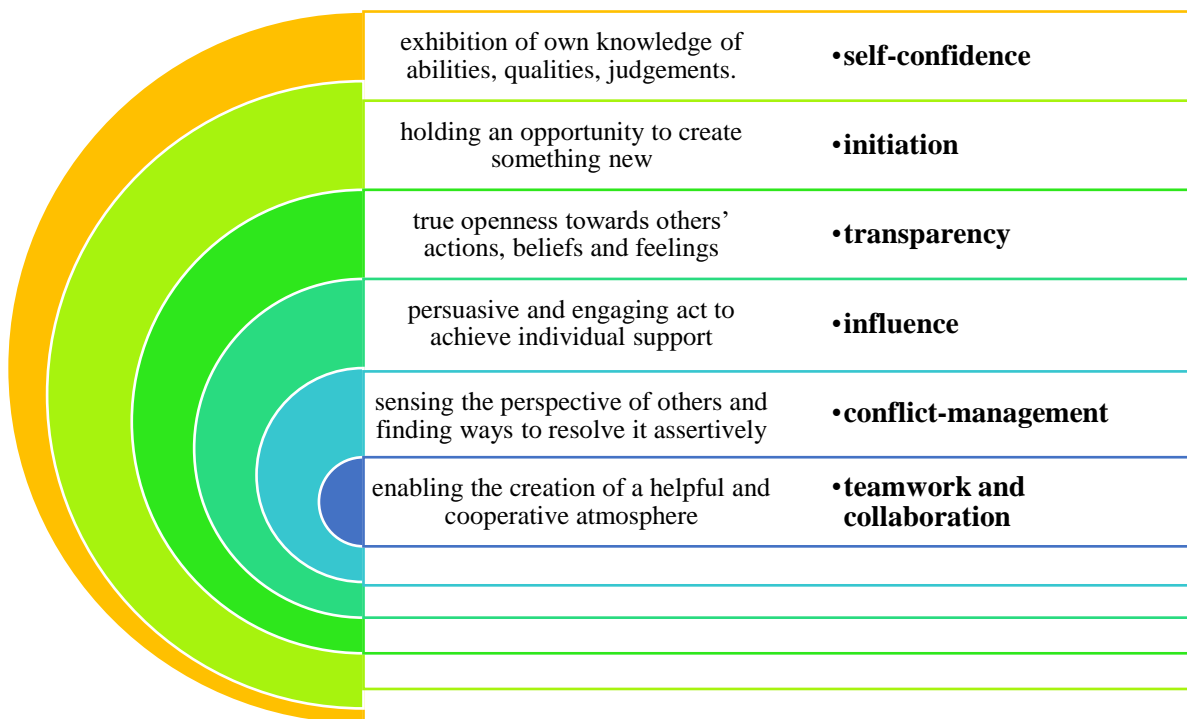


Figure 3.3 Other managerial competences which are important in business communication

### Coding emotions from the face

In 2002 Daniel Kahneman won the Nobel Prize in economics. His research works focus on behaviour and neuroscience and propose that people are not really logical in decision making. He thinks that instead of abstract theory it is easier for the brain to digest information if we categorize. The brain makes shortcuts through categorizing when processing information by framing (comparing and trying to put information into an already existing “box”) and by anchoring (evaluating the new information according to our present knowledge). Actions that carry positive emotions reveal/relieve??? reveal does not fit into the sentence the brain and ease our behaviour. On the contrary negative emotions which are associated with survival are considerably stronger. Evidently you feel more pain from loss than profit from pleasure. When it comes to decision-making and communication our brain reacts to the negative information in four ways:

1. If it is *familiar*, (then) the information may influence and strengthen the already existing negative experience, so your reaction to this message would be as earlier to a negative message (e.g. your manager does not appreciate again your project presentation – you get very upset).
2. If you sense a *new risk*, (then) your brain is contemplating whether to accept the new risk while disregarding the familiar risk (e.g. your manager asks you to give a presentation as he/she is busy – you feel fear and anxiety but it is challenging as you have never done it before).
3. You can also have a *fear of regret* when you do not have the courage to make a decision as you have the fear of making a mistake (e.g. you turn down your manager by not accepting to present, though it can be a great opportunity in your career).
4. *Decision paralysis* is when you fail to make a decision as there are lots of choices but you fear of making the wrong choice.

From the above it is clearly visible that the emotional state influences your thoughts which impact your language and actions. The good news is that the emotional state can be developed. One of the methods is to decode the facial expressions.

Facial expressions are universal and cultureless, which means that everywhere in the world they carry the same emotions and have the same meaning. This fact however does not make decoding facial expression easier, as humans have the most facial muscles among the species. Usually a face expression varies from half a second to four seconds thus we are able to distinguish the seven core facial emotions: *happiness* (the only positive), *surprise* (neutral),

and the five negative emotions, which are *fear*, *anger*, *sadness*, *disgust* and *contempt*. There is a tool called *Facial Action Coding System (FACS)* to examine the facial expression developed by Paul Ekman. Let's have a closer look at the seven core faces (Figure 3.4 a,b,c,d,e,f,g).



**Figure 3.4 a Happiness facial expression**

### **Happiness**

- True smile (when cheeks lift up and the corner of the mouth moves up)
- Eyes twinkle
- “crow’s feet” are around the corner of the eyes
- The upper eyelid drops slightly

Happiness is the expression of positive feelings such as joy, satisfaction. It is interesting that smile can fake people and in business especially we need to learn the three distinguishable types of smile: Duchenne smile, which is the true smile; social smile and lying smile. Look at the followings pictures to see the differences (Figure 3.5).

*True smile*  
(*Duchenne smile*)



More face muscles are used in true smile and the lines round the eyes crinkle up more. It is innate, an infant smiles 2 hours after birth.

*Social smile*



The face is rounder and the eyes do not twinkle. An infant has a social smile from about 3 months of age as it learns this skill from its environment.

*Lying smile*



These people raise their forehead muscles, which give off surprised expressions; the eyebrow in curve is the expression of distress.

**Figure 3.5 The three different kinds of smile** Besides the three basic types of smiling there are further subtypes such as half-smile, smug smile, open-mouth smile etc. For examples, please check out the reference for further reading (<http://www.study-body-language.com>).



## Surprise

- Eyes get big and wide
- Eyebrows curves high
- The mouth is open

### Figure 3.4 b Surprised facial expression

Feeling that something unexpected happens you get surprised and this is shown on your face. Sometimes the unexpected frightens, amazes or shocks you, so your face displays the mixed feelings. This emotion accompanies us from birth and it is probably the most difficult to decode, as it can indicate both positive and negative feelings.

Therefore people can also trick the others, just think about your birthday when you got a present and you were “negatively” surprised, but realised you might hurt your parents’ feeling and your consciously express a fake “positive” surprise that the people do not notice at all.



### **Anger**

- Narrow, tight or open but tense lips
- Vertical line between eyes at the forehead
- Tense gazing “snake” eyes
- Eyebrows lower and down together

**Figure 3.4 c Anger facial expression**

If you work with people, especially in stressful environment, unfortunately you easily recognise this facial expression. This emotion appears between three to seven months after birth. When you get angry the blood pressure rises and your face gets red. It is another giveaway signature.



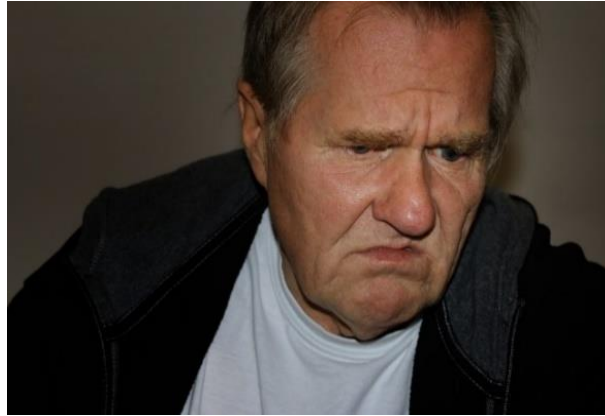
### **Fear**

- Widen eyes
- The eyebrows are raised and pulled together
- Raised upper eyelids and tense lower eyelids
- Lips and chin stretch back
- The jaw is open

**Figure 3.4 d Fear facial expression**

Although fear is innate it appears in childhood the earliest around the fifth month. Fear and anxiety are related feelings. The difference is that the reaction of fear to immediate and specific danger anxiety is a consequence of a non-specific concern or threat. To survive a dangerous situation fear is actually relatively practical as it triggers you to avoid a situation by increasing the capacity of the senses. In business communication however showing fear can be negative as it may influence the business success by limiting your chance.





### Disgust

- The upper lips are raised
- The lips look like an upside-down smile
- The nose wrinkles and turns up
- The inner corners of eyebrows are curved
- 
- Figure 3.4 e Disgust facial expression
- 

Disgust is a strong negative feeling, which appears at birth or within three months. It comes when we experience an offensive phenomenon such as bad food or behaviour. In business you may unconsciously show disgust on your face when you do not like your business partner's appearance or behaviour, on the other hand it is easy to put on a disgusted face on purpose just to manipulate or influence others.



### Sadness

- The focus in the eye is lost
- Eyebrows drop
- The “ditch” between the nostril and the upper mouth corner deepens
- The corner of the lips slightly pulls down

**Figure 3.4 f Sadness facial expression**

Sadness indicates a helpless situation and appears between birth and the third month. Workplace “sadness” can have many roots and sometimes it is better not to force someone to talk about it. The worse thing is to show sympathy and say “I understand” then compare your life with his/her. Instead show empathy and if it is needed, be a good listener. If you are sad, stay away from inquisitive people as they might say even worse statements. Try to be with those you really care for and develop “toolkit” for sadness with things and activities that drag you out from deep melancholy. If someone hurts you, have the courage to talk things over rather than mourn about it for days.



### Contempt

- Tight lip corner and raised only one side
- Assymetric expression: the left side of the face is usually more expressive
- The chin is pulled back

**Figure 3.4 g Contempt facial expression**

Contempt behaviour at a workplace can cause fatal and irreversible damage to the employees and influence the company atmosphere and culture. You may feel contempt if you are deceived, but also when you are big-headed thinking feel you know things better. A humble behaviour is preferred and even though you are a real expert in a situation do not reveal contempt under any circumstances as it curves into the others' memory negatively.

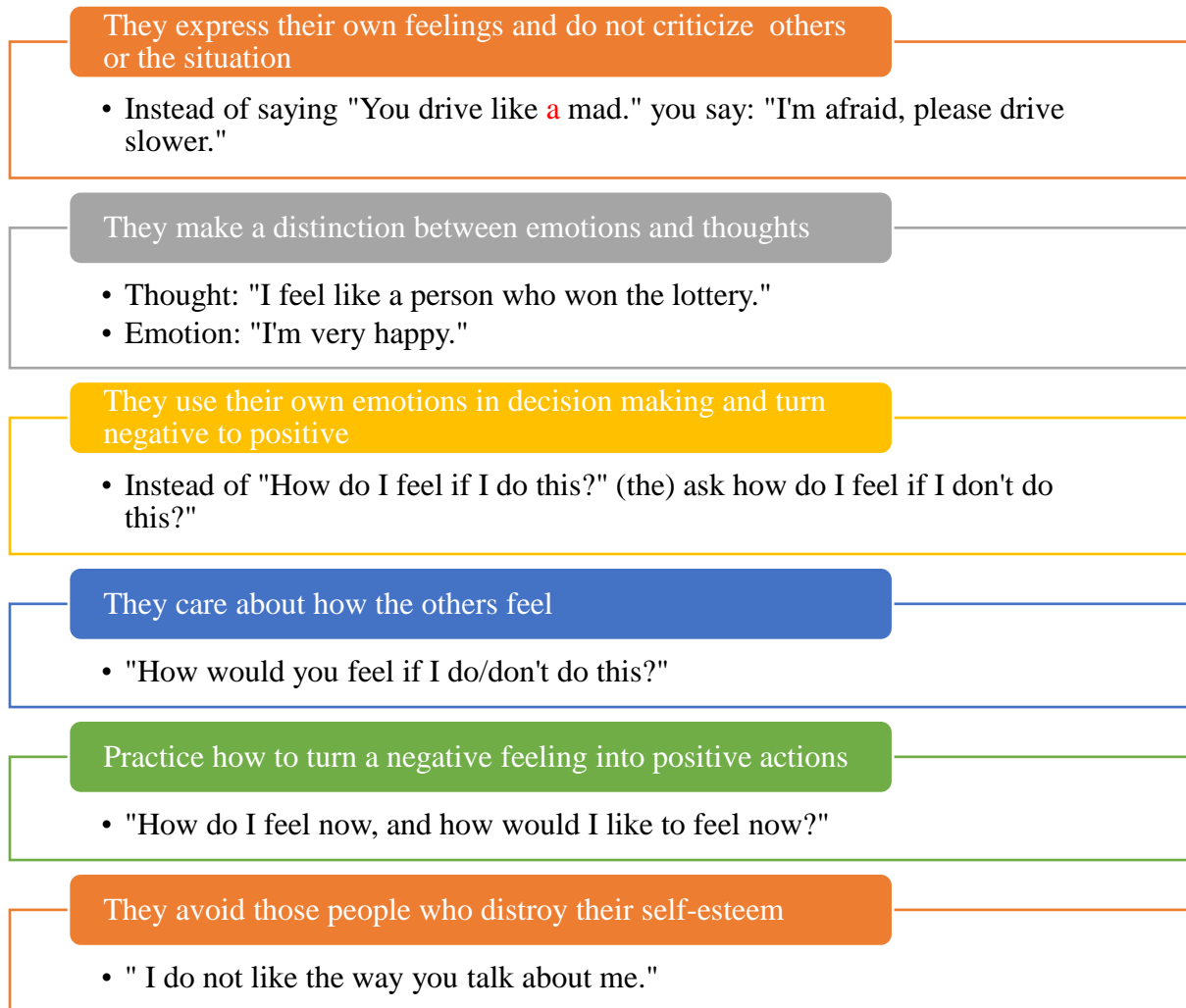
Emotions are more complex and diversely expressed to be able to understand and respond to them adequately in order to minimize misunderstanding. Nonetheless, these seven core face types are easier to recognise on your conversation partners' faces. Researchers state that emotions are more complex; compound emotions are the combination of these basic emotions. In communication it is vital to see what information is conveyed. For example, hatred is a combination of anger and disgust, so if these two basic emotions appear on your face at the same time people decode it as hate.

Nevertheless, there is gap between how people feel and what people say. A study examined that people tend to say that they like something more than they actually feel or express. It was also found that women have higher positive response (say and show) than men but men can

code positive faces better. An interesting result showed racial differences: African-Americans seem more straightforward to express their feelings than white Hispanic people.

### **Communicational competences of an emotional intelligence person**

Communication competences are defined as traits, skills and abilities which enable one to express him/herself verbally and nonverbally. To master these competences inevitably you need some soft skills such as emotional intelligence and social intelligence. Basically, there are three competences that trigger effective communication: *empathy*, *positive acceptance* and *credibility*. Empathy - being aware and understanding the others' feelings and react to them in a right way - is one of the hardest traits to develop. You need to get out from your comfort zone and go into the emotionally tough situation which touches you. In communication you need to practice active listening, which is asking open-ended questions and truly listen to what the other says; be open and present, helpful but discrete. Positive acceptance starts with your self-identity knowledge and strive for equality by fighting the negative prejudices. Try not to say out loud your first thought about a person's appearance, statement or behaviour, try to understand the reason and the motivation behind. When you talk, try to avoid misleading words and expressions, do not manipulate or look down on your speaking partner. Nonverbal clues here are stronger, so be aware of your body language. Without credibility your utterances go in vain, there is no long-term trust. You must make an effort to know the background of things before you want to convince your business partner and the given words/promises must be kept. There are many ways you can develop your emotionally intelligent communication skills, here are some that characterize those who already mastered them (Figure 3.5). Apart from these, there are several other emotional intelligence competences such as assertiveness, which is discussed later in this book.



**Figure 3.5 Some behavioural patterns of an emotionally intelligent person**



### Self-check and exercises

10. How would you define emotional intelligence?
11. What are the differences between emotion, feeling, mood and attitude? Give a situation for each, where do such phenomena appear?
12. Which emotional intelligence elements will make you an effective business communicator? Which one(s) can you learn during your studies at the university and how?
13. How do framing and anchoring work and what are their roles in business communication?
14. What is FACS?
15. Describe the facial expression of a person who is afraid and one who is surprised. Are there any similarities?
16. What are the three main communication competences of an emotionally intelligent person?



### Projects and assignments

6. Observe people in the street, at work, school, festival, sport events etc. Watch their interaction. Pick two of these interactions and write down how and about what they "talked" by reading only their facial expressions.
7. If you are a Hungarian student or speak Hungarian well, please complete the survey on EQ: <http://kerdoiv.gtk.uni-pannon.hu/index.php/32651?lang=hu>
8. Please fill out this EQ test (all nationalities as it is in English), save your result (or print it) and bring it to the class:  
<http://globalleadershipfoundation.com/geit/eitest.html#Start>
9. Read one of the case studies presented on this website. Summarize it in 5 sentences, bring it to class to discuss:  
<http://www.theeqedge.com/main/casestudies.php>

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### Key to the projects and assignments

1. Do not multitask, be present.
2. Do not pontificate, in other words do not preach just only your opinion.
3. Use open ended questions, let people describe what they think
4. Go with the flow and listen, if thoughts come into the mind, speak out.
5. If you don't know, say that you don't know.
6. Do not equate your experience with the speaking partner.
7. Try not to repeat yourself.
8. Stay out of the weeds, meaning, do not overload with data, facts and irrelevant details of the topic.
9. Listen, listen actively this is the most important thing.
10. Be brief to be more interesting, be prepared to be amazed.

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