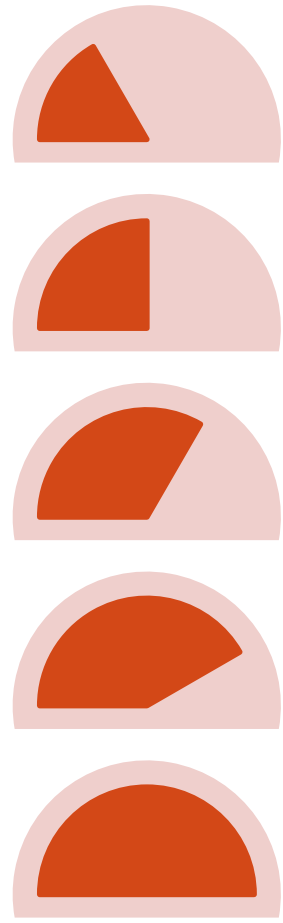


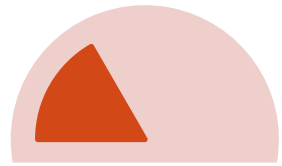
Battle of the Sexes in Communications



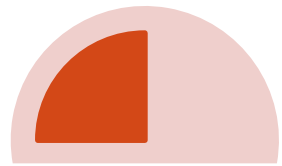
A Discussion-Based
Best Practices Review
by Kimberly Manchester



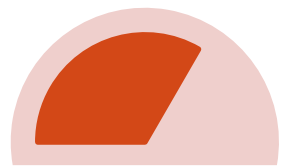
Recognizing the Differences in How Men and Women Communicate



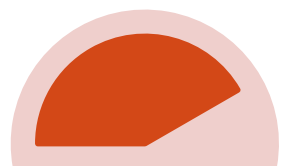
Purpose



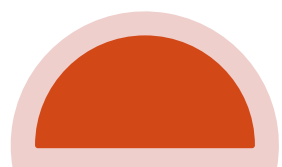
Body Language



Paralanguage



Presence



Bridge Building

Why Are You Talking?

Speaking in general...

Men talk in order to gain power or influence over a situation or over others. They speak:

- To direct
- To inform
- To negotiate in order to increase their power
 - To a man who already holds the power, negotiating is seen as a sign of weakness



Why Are You Talking?

Speaking in general...

Women talk in order to build relationships, both business and personal. They speak:

- To learn or understand
- To encourage or compliment
- To find common ground
 - To a woman, equality can be achieved by stressing our similarities
 - Once equality is established, power can be achieved



Why Are You Talking?

Speaking in general...

Believe it or not, men and women speak in similar amounts each day – approximately 16,000 words

Men and women use their words to communicate different topics

- Women talk about people and their interests
- Men talk about ideas and objects

- Example: A woman will ask if someone **enjoyed** an event; a man will ask about the person's new **iPhone**



Watch Your (Body) Language

Body language is the use of facial expression, physical movement, and other **non-verbal cues** to communicate an emotional state

Positive

Smiling
Head Nodding*
Laughter
Others...?

Negative

Frowning
Pursed Lips
Eye-Rolling
Others...?

Neutral

Crossed Arms*
Eye-Contact*
Leaning
Others...?

*Surprise! This has a different meaning when a woman does it than when a man does it.



Watch Your (Body) Language



While most body language is seen as having **universal** meaning, a few movements **differ in meaning** between the sexes

Head-Nodding

- When a **man** nods his head, he is signaling agreement
- When a **woman** nods her head, she is signaling that she is listening – but she may not agree with what you are saying

Watch Your (Body) Language

While most body language is seen as having **universal** meaning, a few movements **differ in meaning** between the sexes

Crossed Arms

- When a **man** crosses his arms over his chest, he is signaling that he is closed off to what you are saying
- When a **woman** crosses her arms over her chest, she is signaling that you are being too aggressive



Watch Your (Body) Language

While most body language is seen as having **universal** meaning, a few movements **differ in meaning** between the sexes

Eye Contact

- When a **man** uses prolonged direct eye-contact, it is used as a challenge to power and position, to establish Alpha status
- When a **woman** uses prolonged direct eye-contact, it is to establish trust and develop a deeper personal connection



Umm...Ah...Like...

Paralanguage is the use of **passive verbalizations** to communicate. It includes:

- Tone and pitch of voice (gentle, harsh, growling, squeaking)
- Volume (whispering, yelling, screaming in terror)
- Gesturing noises (hmmm, oh, uh-huh)

Paralanguage can **communicate** mood, expected behavior, or agreement

The technical term for paralanguage is “**nonlexical components**”



Umm...Ah...Like...

Filler words such as “um”, “ah”, and the ubiquitous “like” are also nonlexical components.

These **nonlexical components** add nothing to the meaning of what is being communicated...but they DO communicate:

- Confusion
- Nervousness
- A pause in thought processes

Nonlexical components are often used subconsciously – the speaker doesn't even realize that he or she using them



Umm...Ah...Like...

Who uses paralanguage more? It depends on the situation

- In general, **women** use paralanguage more than men simply because women use **verbal communication** more than men
- Women use filler words more than men
 - When a man pauses, he is done speaking
 - When a woman pauses, she is seeking to emphasize her point
 - This pause is often **misinterpreted**, and the woman is interrupted; thus the increase in filler words



Umm...Ah...Like...

Who uses paralanguage more? It depends on the situation

- In general, **men** use paralanguage to convey agreement, interest, or understanding...without actually saying it
- Offering verbal **agreement** before the speaker is finished presenting can be seen as a transfer of power, especially in a business or sales negotiation



Let's Get Physical...Space

Men and women also differ in their use of **physical space**

- Men take up more **physical room** than women because
 - They are usually of broader/larger build
 - It conveys **power** over the space
 - Men will sometimes splay their arms and legs to make themselves look larger
- Men prefer to talk **face-to-face**
- Men stand with fully erect **posture** to display **maximum** height
- **Touch** consists of handshakes, shoulder claps, and other displays of **physical strength**



Let's Get Physical...Space

Men and women also differ in their use of **physical space**

- Women prefer to stand **side-by-side**, giving the appearance of **strength in numbers**
- Women are more likely to **shift their bodies** towards the speaker, rather than plant themselves in one spot
- Women are more likely to sit – which expands their hips – and use fluid **hand gestures** to indicate **familiarity** with, and control of, the space
- **Touch** consists of hugs, arm touches, and supportive gestures that result in the release of oxytocin (the “feel good” hormone)



Bridging the Gap



The statements made in this presentation are *generalizations* – not everyone will fit the observed behavior patterns.

In order to improve communication between men and women, the following *tips* are offered:

Bridging the Gap



Avoid falling victim to **stereotypes**

- Do not **assume** that someone is behaving a certain way because of their sex
- Do not attempt to model your **behavior** after how you think you should act. Be yourself
- Understand that not all behaviors say what they generally mean. Some people cross their arms because it's comfortable

Bridging the Gap



Be aware of your behavioral response

- Humans act **instinctively**; we do not always **think** things through
 - Do not allow your **subconscious bias** or belief in stereotypes to direct how you communicate with the opposite sex

Bridging the Gap



Be aware of the response to your behavior

- Not everyone will **respond** to you in the same way – don't take it personally
 - Some people **do not like** to be touched; others only allow people they are close with to touch them
 - Some people do not shake hands for **medical reasons** (arthritis, depressed immunity)

Bridging the Gap



Be open to communications styles that differ from your own

- Not everyone is comfortable with interpersonal communication
 - Introverts are uncomfortable speaking with **domineering** personalities
 - Extroverts are not (usually) **flirting** with you
- Learn how others communicate, and try to adapt for the situation

Summary



Purpose

Speaking in general, men talk in order to gain power or influence over a situation, or over others; women talk in order to build relationships, both business and personal.

Body Language

Body language is the use of facial expression, physical movement, and other non-verbal cues to communicate an emotional state. It can be positive, negative, or neutral. Some body language has a different meaning when a woman does it than when a man does it.

Paralanguage

Paralanguage is the use of passive verbalizations to communicate. It can communicate mood, expected behavior, or agreement. The technical term for paralanguage is “nonlexical components”. Filler words are a type of paralanguage, and serve a purpose in communicating.

Presence

While men and women differ in their use of physical space, both use their body to display dominance and control of the space.

Bridge Building

Remember not to fall victim to stereotypes or bias. Do not take unexpected responses personally. Learn how others communicate and try to meet them halfway.

A 3D white figure stands inside a circular frame, holding a white rectangular sign. The sign has the word "Questions?" written on it in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The figure is positioned to the left of the sign, with its right hand resting on the top edge of the sign. The circular frame has a white border and a thin orange line on the right side. In the top-left corner of the overall image, there are decorative elements: a textured beige vertical bar, a red sphere, and some faint circular patterns.

Questions?