



## ROLE OF NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION IN SPORTS

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### **Abstract**

***“The most important thing is hearing what is not said- Peter F. Drucker”***

Sports are all about the body movement and Non-Verbal communication. Verbal and Non Verbal both kind of communication is very important for sports. Sports communication encompasses the study of interpersonal and organizational communication between participants within a particular sport. Verbal communication is important but sometimes we need to understand the role of Non Verbal communication more than Verbal and if it is talked about sports, then definitely the players need to know as well as understand the Non Verbal communication. Being able to read body language is an essential skill for sports person who need to think quickly on the field or court. Teammates have to be able to closely read each other's movements. Typically players have to communicate with each other on the court or field nonverbally, without saying anything. Nonverbal communication is all around us in the sports world today. Many people don't realize the importance of communicating without speaking in sports games. Certain things are not conveyed by words or verbal means because individual are not simply skilled to deliver or not trained to explain in appropriate means or symbols. On verbal communication is a message expressed differently than through words and these messages are 4.5 times more rapidly decoded than words. Non Verbal messages can confirm, support, contradict, complete or replace messages transmitted through words. Non Verbal communication plays a major role in the success of a sports person. They have to be able to interpret and send Non Verbal signals to teammates and competitors incredibly quickly. Infact sports person might be better than the average person in decoding Non Verbal signs because it is such an internal part of team play. So, overall all can say that it's not like only the verbal communication in sports is important but sometimes we need to focus on our Non Verbal communication, it helps us to connect with our team members, the team members have their own secret codes with the help of which they and their team partners can only decode that sign or signal. So, the main focus of this paper is to explore various important and useful nonverbal communication cues in the area of sports.

**Key Words:** *Verbal Communication, Nonverbal Communication, Body Language.*

### **Introduction**

Channel of communication is the mode that is used for conveying the message from the source to the receiver. Communication channels are the paths along which messages travel either from one person to another or from one group to another or both. A message could be verbal, written, face to face, telephonic or media etc. The appropriateness of channel selection contributes to effectiveness of communication. Communication channels have been compared to the nervous system of organisms because they perform the same function. Both carry messages, or impulses, from one place to another to keep the organism or organization/team informed about any changes taking place in the environment. In sports message must pass the following tests:

1. It must be comprehended.
2. It must be trusted.
3. It must be accepted; and.
4. Action must take place.

There are two kinds of communication-Verbal Communication, Non Verbal Communication. Both communications are very important. Especially, Nonverbal communication plays a vital role in getting through to other people. It can be as effective or ineffective as words themselves. It can also occur on a level at which no words can possibly convey their meanings. There are a number of bodily channels through which unspoken communication is carried out. Touch, proximity, the loudness as well as softness of the voice, gestures, facial expression and the chemistry of humans' emotions are channels used in nonverbal communication. This communication studies headshaking, laughing, nodding, raised eyebrows, squints, winks, whistles, sneers, eye-contact, kisses, pouts, arm waving, pointing, hand shaking, beckoning, drumming with fingers, crossing legs, clapping, weeping, crossing legs etc. There are a few nonverbal ways athletes do this. The eyebrow flash is something that human do instinctively when they want to attract attention. Players do this for teammates when they want to initiate a pass, it is a nonverbal way of saying "you ready?" Torso tilting is another thing that players do when they want other players to engage with them. Basketball players sometimes will aim their torso at a player a split second before they pass to them. This nonverbally tells their teammates to get ready. The chin salute is a more subtle way to point. When players want to point towards an opening a goal or a player they often use their chin as a substitute finger. It is more subtle than using their hands and sometimes the only area of their body open when their hands are dribbling, holding, sticks or rackets or defending against the other side.



Watch player's chins as they move down the court and how their chins nod directions at each other. on verbal communication is not just commonplace in team sports ,but it is also sometimes essential to the success or failure of a team. If we talk about the game of baseball, is ruled by the giving and sometimes stealing, of signs and signals and other team sports have their own unspoken codes that allow teams to work together without giving away their secrets to the opposition. For example, In a baseball game a pitcher and a catcher interact with hand movements or certain gestures with the help of which they are able to know how the ball has to be passed to each other. Similarly, in other sports like cricket, the bowler may give hand gestures to the fielders related to how to be pointed the field.

When a player misses a goal, makes a mistake or feels embarrassed they often do the body language of shame. This is when someone puts the tips of their fingers up to the side of their forehead. It's as if the players is trying to shield himself from the insults hurled upon him from the crowd. In a true moment of devastation a player will cover both his/her eyes with his/her hands and entire face to block out the shame. This is called eye blocking.

Nonverbal communication in sports includes-Facial expression (e.g. smiling, eyebrow, raising, frowning) gestures (e.g. waving, pointing, counting or culture specific ones like thumps up) posture and body language (e.g. arm crossing, leg crossing) Proxemics (personal space and distance) eye gaze (e.g. staring, blinking, winking) haptics (e.g. Touching to communicate). The culture and background of a player can have an influence on many of these non-verbal communication styles. However, the cultural difference effect the non verbal communication a lot and thus it is highly essential to be sensitive the what and how the cues are being given.

Actually the only nonverbal communication that has been found to be universally understood among all citizens of the world are facial expressions of the four basic emotions that are happiness, sadness, fear and anger. Paralanguge has also played an important role in nonverbal communication. Intonation, rhythm, tone, intensity, volume and the topic of speech are considered elements of paralanguage.

Arms crossed at the chest. When a person with whom you are speaking crosser their arms at their chest means most times that the person is looking at an unconscious level towards self-protection and they are using their arms as a shield. The method in which they cross their arms as well as the moment in the conversation at which players do it can determine the cause for which the other person adopts this posture .The most commonly encountered motives for doing this are: uncertainty or distrust in themselves, holding back in the expression of their emotions, invasion of their personal space and the need to protect themselves against boredom or hostility.

Non- verbal communication in human beings consist of signals which are identical to those used by animals. However, human social behavior uses a second communication channel, i.e. language. There are three distinct kinds of human non verbal communication, each having different origins and modes of functioning. Some non verbal communication is used to convey emotions and attitudes and manage the immediate social situation. Nonverbal communication is also used for supporting and complementing verbal communication. This tendency is found only in human beings, and is coordinated with speech in a complex way. Nonverbal communication is also developed for replacing language, as in gesture language.

As an athlete or coach, non verbal communication is a key to success and a powerful tool to enhance performance and team work. Players rely on it during games, practices and tournaments. When players are far apart from each other or the coach wants to signal changes in position or strategy. With the use of these signals the opposing team will have great difficulty to decode them, which will deny them the ability to conjecture what game plan is being utilized. Without the use of nonverbal communication teams would have difficulty maintaining their plan of action in different situations.

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