

Figure 13.4 Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal Action	Examples	What They Could Mean
Eye contact	Looking directly at someone	
	Avoiding eye contact	
	Fixed gaze	
Posture	Slumping	
	Standing very erect	
	Leaning forward when seated	
Facial expressions	Smiling/frowning	
	Squinted eyes	
	Blank stare	
Clothing/emblems	Well dressed and pressed	
	Wrinkled and sloppy	
	"Smelly"	
Artifacts	Jewelry	
	Tattoos	
	Body/facial piercings	
Gestures	Waving arms	
	Fingers pointed toward person	
	Crossed arms	
Touch	Patting someone on the back	
	Firm handshake	
	Weak handshake	

such as a message ending a relationship, may select a less-rich communication message—they may be more likely to send a letter or an e-mail rather than share the bad news face-to-face" (Beebe et. al., 2008). Technology has become an integral part of our communication strategies.

Some may ask, can CMC really be considered "interpersonal" when you are not meeting face to face with another person? The answer is yes. Why? Because in today's rich CMC environment, we can *infer or imply emotions* as we send and receive electronic communication. For example, we use symbols such as ☺ to indicate happiness or humor, and ☹ to indicate that we are sad or upset. We use abbreviations such as LOL (for laugh out loud). We even SCREAM AT OTHERS or SPEAK WITH EMPHASIS when we use all capital letters in our communication. Additionally, many people have cameras connected to their computers so the sender and receiver can see each other's facial expressions on the screen. Therefore, emotions can be conveyed through CMC, although there are not as many nonverbal clues to view and interpret as in face-to-face communication (Lane, 2008). Because we cannot see all the nonverbal clues associated with face-to-face communications, we are more likely to misunderstand the message when using CMC.

The fact that we are not face to face does not seem to negatively affect our communication efforts via technology. Several studies suggest that CMC relationships differ very little

"The information superhighway is clearly not just a road for moving data from one place to another, but a roadside where people can pass each other, occasionally meet, and decide to travel together."

—Beebe, Beebe, and Redmond