Nonverbal communication: Its importance in salesmanship

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University of Nebraska at Omaha

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NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION: ITS IMPORTANCE IN SALESMANSHIP

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of Psychology
and the
Faculty of the Graduate College
University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
University of Nebraska at Omaha

by
Kenneth Paul De Meuse
May, 1978
THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the faculty of the Graduate College, University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Department</th>
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<tr>
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Chairman

Date 5/5/75
Dedicated to

BARBARA DE MEUSE

whose constant emotional and financial support has enabled the author to continue his education.
Acknowledgments

The author would like to express gratitude to several people who have aided in the completion of this thesis. Dr. Clemm C. Kessler, III, thesis advisor, has contributed tremendous insight in the area of salesmanship. The questions he posed were of extreme value in interpreting the results.

The author would also like to thank Dr. James Thomas and Dr. Carl Greenberg for their continual help throughout all stages of the thesis. In addition, a great deal of appreciation goes to Dr. Richard Wikoff for contributing experimental design and statistical expertise.

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It has been "common knowledge" for decades that verbal skills are necessary in selling. Many authors stress the importance of verbal skills a successful salesperson must possess (Feldman, 1974; Jones & Healey, 1973; Perry, 1975; Townsend, 1966). In this study, however, we are concerned with the nonverbal skills a salesperson must possess. How vital are nonverbal skills to a salesperson's performance? More specifically, are nonverbal skills even more important in sales success than verbal skills?

After an extensive review of the nonverbal communication (NVC) literature, this author found that no empirical studies have been performed in this area (cf., Note 1). Several studies dealing with the importance of NVC in attitude formation, however, have been performed (e.g., Birdwhistell, 1970; Mehrabian & Ferris, 1967; Mehrabian & Wiener, 1967). In addition, some research investigating the importance of NVC in a dyadic relationship has been conducted in the counseling and psychotherapy fields (e.g., Graves & Robinson, 1976; Greene, 1977; Haase & Tepper, 1972). These studies have attempted to ascertain the importance of NVC relative to verbal communication. Other studies conducted in laboratory environments (e.g., Albert & Dabbs, 1970; Matarazzo, Wiens, & Saslow, 1965; Mehrabian & Williams, 1969; Rosenfeld, 1966) have reached tentative conclusions concerning the importance of NVC in communicator persuasiveness. Before delving into this literature, it is necessary to point out the potency of NVC generally and define the
To different researchers, NVC connotes different things. Indeed, Wiener, DeVoe, Rubinow, and Geller (1972) spend several pages of their literature review differentiating between nonverbal behavior and NVC. Communicative elements such as postural movements, facial expressions, eye contact, vocal intonation, gestures, and proxemic behaviors are commonly found in experimental paradigms. Oftentimes, the researcher will study just one nonverbal communicative element (i.e., facial expression, or eye contact, or etc.) and thereby avoid defining the "whole" of NVC. Studying NVC in this unidimensional fashion, however, negates any and all meaningful interactions. Thus, for the sake of clarity and quality, Eisenberg and Smith's (1971) definition of NVC has been adopted: NVC includes "all communication except that which is coded in words" (p. 20). Likewise, NVC has been investigated in this study utilizing a holistic paradigm.

Studies Investigating the Potency of NVC

The potency of NVC has been empirically demonstrated over and over again. Numerous researchers have concluded that NVC plays a significant role in the total communication process between individuals (Ekman & Friesen, 1969; Greene, 1977; Hackney, 1974; Knapp, 1972; Maier & Thurber, 1968; Shapiro, 1966; Strahan & Zytowski, 1976). Birdwhistell (1970) stated:

As professionally literate members of a culture devoted to literacy, we are strongly tempted to believe that words carry meaning and that all other nonword behavior merely modifies it.
Thus, there are those who feel that words form the natural center of the communicational universe and that all other modes of communication are to be studied as subsystems subordinate to it. Such a decision predetermines the nature of the communicational process and I am as yet unwilling, from the situations which I have examined, to assign such priority to any of the infracommmunicational systems. For the kinescist, silence is just as golden as are those periods in which the linguistic system is positively operative (p. 188).

Birdwhistell's comments are even more impressive when considering that little, if any, empirical research has been performed in the selling area.

People in general and salespersons in particular seem to have a strong intuitive sense of NVC; therefore, why study it? A major problem with intuitive understanding of a phenomenon, however, is that it is exceedingly difficult to articulate and systematically relate information and understanding to others (Haase & Tepper, 1972).

Within the last decade, nonverbal patterns of communication have been removed somewhat from the intuitive level and given the beginnings of a systematic empirical foundation. One of the primary concerns of recent research has been to understand the interaction between the nonverbal and verbal components of communication. These two levels occur simultaneously in most natural situations, and a number of researchers have addressed the question of how much each level contributes.
to the overall interpretation of behavior.

Perhaps the best known research on this question has been that of Mehrabian and his colleagues (Mehrabian, 1968a, 1968b, 1971; Mehrabian & Ferris, 1967; Mehrabian & Wiener, 1967). To understand and assess the relative importance of verbal and nonverbal communication, Mehrabian and his associates examined subject responses to "double-bind communication." Double-bind communication occurs when what a communicator says (verbal level) is inconsistent with what he does or how he says it (nonverbal level); a real example of such an inconsistent message is sarcasm. What these researchers discovered was that, in instances of double-bind communication, the nonverbal level has a far greater impact in human interaction and attitude formation than the verbal level.

For example, Mehrabian and Wiener (1967) found when vocal communication of attitude is incongruent with verbal communication of attitude, addressees respond to the two-channel communication by subordinating the verbal component to the vocal component. If, for instance, the word "scram" is said in a tone of voice which is independently judged as communicating positive attitude toward the addressee, the consensual interpretation of the total communication is positive. In a similar experiment (Mehrabian & Ferris, 1967), congruent and incongruent facial expressions were used. Again, results indicated the content of the message has relatively little effect on the listener; the accompanying facial expression has a far greater impact.

It was largely on the basis of these two investigations that
Mehrabian (1971) formulated an equation apportioning the relative contributions of vocal, visual, and content cues in the communication process. He suggested that "the combined effect of simultaneous verbal, vocal, and facial attitude communication is a weighted sum of their independent effects as follows: $A_{\text{Total}} = 0.07 \text{ Verbal} + 0.38 \text{ Vocal} + 0.55 \text{ Facial}$" (p. 140). Thus, Mehrabian concluded that NVC has 13 times the impact of verbal communication.

Other researchers also have studied the communication process and have ventured estimates of the relative contribution of verbal and nonverbal levels in communication. Birdwhistell (1970) and Knapp (1972) speculated that approximately 65 to 70 percent of the social meaning of a conversation or an interaction is carried by the nonverbal channels. Argyle, Salter, Nicholson, Williams, and Burgess (1970) likewise concluded nonverbal cues were more salient than verbal cues. These researchers found that nonverbal channels carried from 1.67 to 12.50 times the effect of verbal cues, depending upon the relative initial strength of the cues in both channels.

The general feeling one gets from these studies is, obviously, that NVC outweighs verbal communication in determining how messages are interpreted. Indeed, this is the prevailing belief in the NVC field. Unfortunately, this conclusion rests upon a highly specific experimental base and, therefore, the external generalizability of these studies is questionable. Most of this research is limited due to three non-naturalistic design features: (a) the use of posed channel contradictions (e.g., negative content intentionally said in a positive voice); (b) the
use of context-free nonverbal channels, often in artificial isolation from other communication channels; and (c) a narrow focus on judgments about emotions, ignoring other aspects of person perception and interpretation (Archer & Akert, 1977).

The importance of NVC in the counseling and psychotherapy arena has been recognized since the time of Freud and Jung (Harrison, 1973). Only recently, however, has there been much empirical research generated. Much of this research has concentrated on the relative impact verbal and nonverbal communication has on judgments of counselor qualities, i.e., empathy, genuineness, warmth, etc. (Graves & Robinson, 1976; Haase & Tepper, 1972; Smith-Hanen, 1977; Strahan & Zytowski, 1976). Other studies have centered on ascertaining the various nonverbal components of communication which facilitate effective counselor/client therapy (Greene, 1977; Hackney, 1974; Tepper & Haase, 1978). All the studies have found that NVC is of critical importance in affecting the relationship between counselor and client. In addition, the majority of these studies do not possess the shortcomings the aforementioned studies performed by Argyle et al., Birdwhistell, and Mehrabian and his colleagues possess.

Research indicates that an individual's nonverbal behavior is capable of communicating information about that individual's feelings, and attitudes. Although the external generalizability of some studies is questionable, it appears the overall consensus is that NVC has more impact on message interpretation than verbal communication. This is not to downplay the role of verbal communication. More than likely a delicate balance exists between the two, and effective communication is
contingent upon maintaining that balance. On the other hand, one must recognize the importance NVC contributes and realize that, in addition to the customary oral mode of communication, individuals also transmit information continuously through their facial expressions, body movements, vocal cues, and interpersonal spacing. Since salesmanship involves continuous human presence with the prospective buyer, one would think his or her NVC would affect the overall sales presentation.

Studies Investigating NVC Persuasiveness

As previously mentioned, no empirical research has been conducted involving the importance of NVC in selling. On the other hand, several studies conducted in laboratory settings have systematically examined the effects of NVC on communicator persuasiveness. These studies can be grouped into three subsets, depending on the methodology which was employed. One group of researchers investigated the degree to which the communicator intended to nonverbally (and verbally) present a message persuasively and the degree to which that message was perceived (decoded) as persuasive by the addressees (La Crosse, 1975; Maslow, Yoselson, & London, 1971; Mehrabian & Williams, 1969). Another group examined the influence differing nonverbal cues had on actual communicator persuasiveness (Albert & Dabbs, 1970; Brehm, 1966; Matarazzo et al., 1965; Mills & Aronson, 1965). A final group of psychologists attempted to assess the effects of NVC on persuasion by asking subjects to roleplay (encode) in a persuasive or unpersuasive manner (Mehrabian & Williams, 1969; Rosenfeld, 1966). In addition to the above mentioned laboratory studies, two field experiments were performed evaluating the
importance of NVC in persuasiveness (Dion & Stein, 1978; Kleinke, 1977).

The above researchers have altered a variety of nonverbal independent variables that influence the amount of communicator persuasiveness, ranging from types of gesturing to "affiliative nonverbal manner" to physical attractiveness. Table 1 outlines these relationships more explicitly. Salesmanship entails the ability to persuade others and to change attitudes; therefore, these studies will be inspected more thoroughly in the next few pages.

In order to prevent any misconceptions about the word, "persuasiveness," the following definition by Mehrabian and Williams (1969, p. 45) will be used: "A persuasive communication is one in which the communicator's goal is to change the attitude of the listener (in the desired direction)."

In the decoding studies, NVC was manipulated in a number of different ways. La Crosse (1975) investigated the perception of communicator persuasiveness (and attractiveness) through the expression of nonverbal behavior. Two female and two male counselors were trained to portray an "affiliative" manner and an "unaffiliative" manner. In the affiliative condition, nonverbal behaviors consisted of smiles, positive head nods, gestures with the hands, 80 percent eye contact, direct (0 degrees) shoulder orientation, and a 20 degree forward body lean. The unaffiliative condition was defined as only 40 percent eye contact, a 20 degree backward body lean, an angle of shoulder orientation 30 degrees away from the subject, and no smiles, gestures, or positive head nods. La Crosse found that counselors in the affiliative manner condition were perceived as
Table 1

Taxonomy of Persuasiveness Studies Conducted in NVC Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Setting</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Investigation</th>
<th>Nonverbal Behavior(s) Studied</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory</td>
<td>Perceived (decoded) persuasiveness</td>
<td>La Crosse (1975)</td>
<td>&quot;affiliative nonverbal manner&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maslow et al. (1971)</td>
<td>&quot;expression of confidence nonverbally&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mehrabian &amp; Williams (1969)</td>
<td>eye contact, interpersonal space, body orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actual persuasiveness</td>
<td>Albert &amp; Dabbs (1970)</td>
<td>interpersonal space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Brehm (1966)</td>
<td>interpersonal space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Matarazzo et al. (1965)</td>
<td>gestures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mills &amp; Aronson (1965)</td>
<td>physical attractiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roleplayed (encoded) persuasiveness</td>
<td>Mehrabian &amp; Williams (1969)</td>
<td>body orientation, eye contact, facial activity, gestures, speech rate, volume, quality, and intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rosenfeld (1966)</td>
<td>facial expression (smiling), head nods, gestures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dion &amp; Stein (1978)</td>
<td>physical attractiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kleinke (1977)</td>
<td>interpersonal space, eye gaze</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
significantly more persuasive (and attractive) than counselors in the unaffiliative manner condition.

Maslow et al. (1971) investigated the extent to which confidence expressed nonverbally affects persuasion. The researchers employed a professional actor to play the role of a law student presenting his views about a case. Before filming him, the actor tape-recorded a discussion of the case written in a neutral manner. The actor then was videotaped portraying (a) a confident manner, (b) a neutral manner, and (c) a doubtful manner. The "neutral discussion" was dubbed to each videotape condition; each videotape was then presented to three different groups of subjects. The subjects were instructed to roleplay jury members in the law case and determine the verdict. Each not guilty vote was used as an assessment of persuasiveness. They found a direct linear relationship between the amount of nonverbally displayed confidence and magnitude of persuasiveness. Unfortunately, a major weakness in the study was that the researchers did not quantify levels of expressed nonverbal confidence. All the researchers did was to ask the communicator to act in a "confident," "doubtful," or "neutral" manner. Regardless of this shortcoming, it appears quite evident from the two decoding studies cited that perceived communicator persuasiveness is enhanced by nonverbally displaying affiliative and/or confident behavior.

One may counter, however, that just because persuasiveness is perceived to be enhanced does not denote that it actually is enhanced. On the other hand, researchers who have used actual persuasiveness as the dependent measure have arrived at similar results. Likewise, field
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studies have shown NVC influences persuasiveness.

In the Albert and Dabbs (1970) study, a friendly or hostile speaker delivered two persuasive messages to a subject seated 1-2, 4-5, or 14-15 feet away from him. Positive attitude change (persuasiveness) increased linearly with distance, whereas, negative attitude change occurred in the 1-2 foot condition. They also found, regardless of the distance, the friendly speaker was rated "more sincere, more persuasive, and more pleasing in style and manner of presentation" (p. 267). The experimenters explained their findings by citing Brehm's earlier work and his concept of psychological reactance.

Brehm (1966) conducted many investigations in the area of physical distances (proxemics) and attitude change. Brehm found that close physical proximity between individuals constitutes an invasion of "personal space." Individuals frequently feel embarrassed, bewildered, and pressured. As a result, Brehm concluded the individual experiences a motivational state that operates to resist, reject, and react against any pressure that restricts his freedom. He referred to this motivational state as "psychological reactance." If an individual experiences psychological reactance, persuasiveness is inhibited; in fact, negative attitude change frequently occurs.

A field study conducted by Kleinke (1977) does not fully support Albert and Dabbs and Brehm's findings. Kleinke found subjects were more likely to comply to the wishes of the communicator at a close distance (1.5 feet) than at a farther distance (3 feet). In a two-experiment design, subjects were asked (a) if they had found the dime in a phone
booth the confederate had left, or (b) if they would lend the confederate a dime. The experimental settings occurred in (a) Boston's Logan Airport and (b) a middle class shopping mall. While making the request, the confederate either approached the subject to a distance of 1.5 feet and touched him lightly on the arm or limited the approach toward the subject to a distance of 3 feet and either gave a constant gaze or no gaze to the subject. As previously indicated, subjects were more persuaded at the closer distance than at the farther distance. In addition, gaze also made a significant difference but only in the second experiment; subjects gave more dimes under the constant gaze condition. Unfortunately, no interaction results were reported.

Although it appears Kleinke's results contradict Brehm's concept of psychological reactance occurring at close distances, this may not be the case. A confounding variable exists in this study. Perhaps, touching behavior debilitates psychological reactance and provides for a more open, receptive environment. Indeed, Pattison (1973) found that touch in counseling sessions precipitated self-disclosure on the part of the clients. Whatever the case, all three studies (Albert & Dabbs, 1970; Brehm, 1966; Kleinke, 1977) concluded that interpersonal space (NVC) affects communicator persuasiveness.

To study the effect of gestures on persuasiveness, Matarazzo et al. (1965) examined interviewer head-nodding behavior. The experimenters were interested in unconsciously persuading the interviewees to speak longer durations of time in response to questions. The design utilized a 45-minute nondirective interview divided into three 15-minute periods. During
each period the interviewer limited himself to five-second utterances; however, in period two each time the interviewee began an utterance, the interviewer nodded his head repeatedly throughout the whole utterance. Nonverbal social reinforcers i.e., smiling, eye contact, etc., were held constant throughout the 45-minute interview. The results show that during period two (the head-nodding condition) interviewee utterances were significantly longer in duration ($M = 54.7$ seconds) than in periods one and three ($Ms = 36.9$ and $35.4$ seconds, respectively). A cross validation study employing a different interviewer again produced statistically significant results ($p < .001$).

Physical attractiveness seems to also play an important role in persuading others. Mills and Aronson (1965) found an "attractive" female could modify attitudes of male students more than could an "unattractive" girl. Actually, one girl was made up to appear different under two conditions. In the unattractive condition, she was rated repulsive by independent observers; she wore loose fitting clothing; her hair was messy, makeup was conspicuously absent, a trace of a mustache was etched on her upper lip, and her complexion was oily and "unwholesome looking." The experimenters suggested to the groups of students that they would more quickly complete some measuring instruments if a volunteer would read the questions aloud and indicate what they meant. The "volunteer" was either the attractive or unattractive girl. A major shortcoming of the study is that all the subjects were male and the volunteer was a female. Perhaps, the results would not have been so clear cut with a female audience. However, Widgery and Webster, as cited
in Knapp (1972), found that attractive persons are rated high on the character dimension of credibility, regardless of sex.

On the other hand, sex differences were reported to affect interpersonal influence in a field study (Dion & Stein, 1978). Dion and Stein examined the relative success of influence attempts undertaken by attractive versus unattractive elementary students. They categorized students as attractive or unattractive based on ratings from a group of student judges personally unacquainted with them. The students were then divided into eight experimental groups based on sex of communicator, sex of target student, and attractiveness of communicator and one control group. The experimental groups were offered a monetary incentive contingent upon their influencing a peer's behavior. Three groups were found to be the most persuasive: (a) attractive girls tended to be more successful than their unattractive counterparts in influence attempts directed toward peers of the opposite sex; (b) likewise the attractive boys were more successful than unattractive ones when attempting to persuade opposite sex peers; and (c) unattractive boys were more effective than attractive boys with same sex peers. Thus, Dion and Stein's findings would indicate sex of the communicator is a contributing factor, in addition to physical attractiveness, when attempting to persuade others. Again, it is not the primary objective here to debate the directionality of the issue, but merely to point out that physical attractiveness does alter communicator persuasiveness.

Nonverbal communication's influence on persuasiveness was assessed somewhat differently by Rosenfeld (1966); he attempted to identify what
nonverbal cues are important in persuasion by having subjects roleplay. As stated previously, this methodological approach is titled encoding. In the Rosenfeld study, one-half the subjects were instructed to seek approval from their addressees, to persuade them to like you. The other half were instructed to avoid approval from their addressees. The behaviors of the subjects (communicators) in the approval-seeking (AS) and approval-avoiding (AA) conditions were rated on a series of verbal and nonverbal measures. The nonverbal results, as summarized by Rosenfeld, indicated the following:

AS subjects emitted a significantly higher percentage of smiles and a significantly lower percentage of negative head nods than did the AA subjects. AS women significantly surpassed AA women in percentage of gesticulations. AS men were significantly higher than AA men in percentage of positive head nods (p. 600).

In the last few pages, several NVC studies were investigated dealing with communicator persuasiveness. Both laboratory and field study results were discussed. Moreover, persuasiveness was measured utilizing several different methodologies. What can be concluded from all this research? Basically, two empirically supported points can be derived:

1. persuasiveness can be conveyed nonverbally;
2. certain NVC enhances communicator persuasiveness while other NVC inhibits or prevents it.

The next logical question would appear to be what are the nonverbal communicative cues that enhance communicator persuasiveness?

In a complex three-experiment study, Mehrabian and Williams (1969)
explored the nonverbal behaviors associated with perceived persuasiveness, employing both encoding and decoding methodologies. Generally, their results showed that all of the following nonverbal behaviors were associated with increasing intent to persuade and were decoded as enhancing the persuasiveness of the communication: more intonation, more speech volume, higher speech rate, more facial activity, higher rate of gesturing, greater unhalting quality of speech, and more eye contact with the addressee. In addition, it was found that smaller reclining angles and more head nodding were associated with increasing persuasive effort, and that a lower rate of self-manipulation was correlated with the perceived persuasiveness of a communication. Furthermore, it was found that perceived persuasiveness was enhanced by smaller distances from the addressee and an indirect body orientation toward the addressee.

Mehrabian and Williams (1969) also supported an important heretofore assumption: the degree of liking which is nonverbally communicated to an addressee is a positive correlate of the intended persuasiveness of a communicator and the perceived persuasiveness of his communication. Because of this finding, all NVC which is perceived as positive may enhance persuasiveness. Much research has been conducted involving what NVC (nonverbal behaviors) leads to favorable interpersonal evaluations. We will only briefly mention them in the proceeding paragraph.

NVC Studies Examining Interpersonal Liking Behaviors

In addition to the literature previously discussed, the following nonverbal behaviors have been found to affect interpersonal liking:
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1. Body orientation, i.e., the degree to which a communicator's shoulders and legs are turned in the direction of, rather than away from, the addressee (Machotka, 1965; Mehrabian, 1965, 1967, 1968a, 1968b; Reece & Whitman, 1962; Smith-Hanen, 1977);

2. Eye contact (Argyle & Dean, 1965; Exline, 1963; Exline, Gray, & Schuette, 1965; Exline & Messick, 1967; Exline & Winters, 1966; Kleinke, Staneski, & Berger, 1975; Mehrabian, 1968b; Reece & Whitman, 1962);

3. Gestures—facial (Hackney, 1974),—hands and legs (Smith-Hanen, 1977);


5. Physical attractiveness (Reece & Whitman, 1962; Signall & Aronson, 1969; Walster, Aronson, Abrahams & Rottmann, 1966);


See Argyle (1969) and Mehrabian (1969) for reviews of the NVC literature on liking behavior.

Generally, all these studies indicate that (a) a moderately open, direct body position, (b) a high percentage of eye contact, (c) few self-manipulatory gestures, (d) close to moderate interpersonal distances, (e) some tactile stimulation and (f) a high degree of physical attractiveness enhance interpersonal liking. It is not nearly as straightforward as it may appear, however. Much recent research points
to the compensatory processes of NVC (Patterson, 1973; Storms & Thomas, 1977; Watson & Graves, 1966). To study eye contact by itself, or interpersonal distances alone, is practically meaningless (unless stringent controls are employed). Each NVC element (e.g., eye contact, gestures, etc.) is dependent upon and interacts with the other. For example, as humans increase proximity to one another; (a) directness of body orientation decreases, (b) eye contact decreases (for Americans), and (c) loudness in voice decreases (Watson & Graves, 1966). This is why the present investigation of NVC employs a holistic approach, permitting compensatory and meaningful interactions.

Statement of the Problem

When one considers all the empirical nonverbal research discussed thus far, the importance of NVC in persuasion and the profession of sales is quite evident. But just how important is NVC? It is the author's contention that NVC is more important in successful salesmanship than verbal communication. In other words, it is not what the salesperson says that counts, but how he says it.

Initially, it was believed verbal communication and NVC carried similar information (Ekman, 1964). Later it was demonstrated that verbal communication and NVC carried different information; there are communication networks (Ekman & Friesen, 1969) and little overlap in information communicated from the verbal and nonverbal sources (Shapiro, 1966; Washburn & Hakel, 1973). Individuals may be more aware of the linguistic portion of communication; however, other nonverbal channels are also present. These other channels are likewise important avenues of
transmitting and receiving significant information about
an individual. As previously mentioned, when the linguistic (verbal)
and nonlinguistic (nonverbal) channels are inconsistent, the
nonlinguistic information is the one adhered to (Mehrabian & Ferris,

A few studies have investigated the persuasiveness of specific
verbal and NVC channels or modalities (e.g., visual, audio, written
word, etc.). Most of this research was performed several years ago
and was limited to determining whether the written word or spoken word
has more persuasive impact. In general, findings indicate the spoken
word (audio channel) has more persuasiveness than the written word
(transcript or lexical channel) (Elliott, 1937; Knower, 1935), although
some studies have not found a significant difference between the two
modalities (cf., Tannenbaum & Kerrick, 1954).

Obviously, communication is a complex process. In addition to
verbal content, visual, tactual, olfactory, and auditory cues all
interrelate simultaneously, influencing interpersonal communication.
Thus, two general levels, verbal and nonverbal, occurring together in
time, constitute the communicational process. However, which channel
has greater impact on the perceptions of the salesperson-perspective
buyer relationship? Is NVC subservient to verbal communication, or is
it vice versa? Do nonverbal cues act merely as reinforcers of the
salesperson's verbal content? Are NVC and verbal communication levels
different for different salespersons, contingent upon their sales
performance? Could it be that both nonverbal and verbal communication
are equally vital in salesmanship?

The purpose of the present study was multifaceted. The primary objective was to investigate the relative importance of verbal and nonverbal communication in the process of selling. Several hypotheses were developed for testing this relationship. A secondary objective, moreover, was to explore the interpersonal communication process and increase our knowledge and understanding of it.

In order to accomplish this, three salesmen from Northwestern Bell Telephone were videotaped. These salesmen were selected based upon their sales output during the last year; salesman A was from the upper one-third in performance, salesman B from the middle one-third, and salesman C from the lower one-third. Utilizing a completely randomized design format, the videotapes were presented to subjects under five different conditions: filtered audio (filtered speech), visual, transcript, audio, or full-channel. Two of these conditions (filtered audio and visual) composed nonlinguistic or NVC channels and two (transcript and audio) composed linguistic or verbal communication channels; whereas, the full-channel condition composed both verbal and NVC. After "viewing" the videotape, subjects were asked to fill out a Sales Questionnaire, assessing the salesman's persuasiveness. (A few other measures were also compiled; these will be discussed later.)

Three major and three minor hypotheses were tested. A completely randomized two-factor analysis of variance design was used. Due to the lack of research in the area, no directionality was predicted for the three major hypotheses.
Hypothesis 1.

Ho: There is no significant difference in persuasiveness scores on the Sales Questionnaire between the five modes of presentation.

Ha: There is a significant difference in persuasiveness scores on the Sales Questionnaire between the five modes of presentation.

Hypothesis 2.

Ho: There is no significant difference in persuasiveness scores on the Sales Questionnaire between the three salesmen.

Ha: There is a significant difference in persuasiveness scores on the Sales Questionnaire between the three salesmen.

Hypothesis 3.

Ho: There is no significant interaction between the modes of presentation and salesmen in persuasiveness scores on the Sales Questionnaire.

Ha: There is a significant interaction between the modes of presentation and salesmen in persuasiveness scores on the Sales Questionnaire.

These first three hypotheses examined the communication process rather abstractly. Hypothesis 1 was used to assess whether different channels or modes of communication differ inherently in the amount of persuasiveness transmitted. Hypothesis 2 served to determine whether
the three salesmen differed in amount of persuasiveness conveyed in their videotape presentations. Furthermore, Hypothesis 3 tested the overall interaction of the salesmen and the modes of presentation.

The three minor hypotheses dealt with salesman/mode of presentation interactions. Frequently, simple effects interactions are not statistically examined if the overall interaction is found to be nonsignificant. However, most research in the NVC arena has not been guided by general theoretical formulations. Oftentimes, NVC research is descriptive and exploratory in nature. It is from this framework that the present author approached the study; therefore, the minor apriori hypotheses were tested regardless of the significance level of the overall interaction.

Hypothesis 4 was used to investigate the successful (upper one-third in performance) salesman's NVC relative to his verbal communication. Numerous researchers have demonstrated NVC is important in persuasion. Likewise, other researchers have shown that, when verbal and NVC are inconsistent, NVC prevails. Since the successful salesman communicates in an overall positive manner, his NVC evidently would be expected to be persuasive; if it would not be, he would be unsuccessful regardless of how persuasive his verbal communication. Therefore, it is postulated that his persuasiveness transmitted nonverbally is greater than his persuasiveness transmitted verbally.

Based on similar rationale, it was hypothesized that the unsuccessful (lower one-third in performance) salesman's NVC would be less persuasive than his verbal communication. It seemed likely that his NVC was weak,
leading to poor interpersonal communication and poor sales performance, regardless of how highly persuasive his verbal communication.

Hypothesis 4.

Ho: Salesman A's nonverbal (filtered audio plus visual) score in persuasiveness on the Sales Questionnaire is not significantly different from his verbal (transcript plus audio) score.

Ha: Salesman A's nonverbal (filtered audio plus visual) score in persuasiveness on the Sales Questionnaire is significantly greater than his verbal (transcript plus audio) score.

Hypothesis 5.

Ho: Salesman C's nonverbal (filtered audio plus visual) score in persuasiveness on the Sales Questionnaire is not significantly different from his verbal (transcript plus audio) score.

Ha: Salesman C's nonverbal (filtered audio plus visual) score in persuasiveness on the Sales Questionnaire is significantly less than his verbal (transcript plus audio) score.

Finally, the successful and unsuccessful salesman's NVC was investigated together. If nonverbal channels are more persuasive than verbal channels, the successful salesman's NVC persuasiveness should be greater than the unsuccessful salesman's NVC persuasiveness.
Hypothesis 6.

\[ H_0: \text{Salesman A's nonverbal (filtered audio plus visual)} \]
\[ \text{score in persuasiveness on the Sales Questionnaire is} \]
\[ \text{not significantly different from salesman C's nonverbal} \]
\[ \text{(filtered audio plus visual) score.} \]

\[ H_a: \text{Salesman A's nonverbal (filtered audio plus visual)} \]
\[ \text{score in persuasiveness on the Sales Questionnaire is} \]
\[ \text{significantly greater than salesman C's nonverbal} \]
\[ \text{(filtered audio plus visual) score.} \]

**Method**

**Stimulus Material**

Stimulus materials were prepared by videotaping three salesmen from Northwestern Bell Telephone. All the salesmen were classified as account representatives and were male. Salesman A, B, and C each had a minimum of one year's experience and were selected from the upper, middle, and lower one-third sales performance categories, respectively. (Northwestern Bell employs a complex formula which projects the amount of potential sales in each sales territory and categorizes resultant salesperson performance as good, fair, or poor, accordingly. Thus, sales territory and potential sales were controlled in the study.)

Four weeks prior to videotaping, each salesman was given a brief synopsis of the study and instructions for videotaping. In addition, they were given a case history of a pseudo-company which was in drastic need of a completely revamped communication system. The case history was constructed from a film Bell Telephone uses to train salespersons
on what to look for when analyzing the needs of a prospective client; the three salesmen in this study had no knowledge of the film. (See Appendix F for specific salesmen instructions and case history.) Basically, their directions were to present themselves and the product as though they were "actually selling their product to a real client." They were informed to limit their presentation to the introductory or orientation phase, due to a five-minute videotaping time restriction. Sales presentations frequently last several hours and, therefore, were limited to five minutes in the study for two reasons: (a) suspected boredom for subjects in the study if they had to "view" a presentation for longer than five minutes, and (b) cost of producing the videotapes. The initial phase of the sales presentation was selected as the most critical segment in an entire presentation (Note 2). In the first five minutes, the salesman either "turns on" or "turns off" a client; therefore, the introductory phase was the one selected for videotaping.

The following modifications were employed in the videotaped presentations to provide communications in five experimental conditions. These conditions included two nonverbal (nonlinguistic) channel conditions, two verbal (linguistic) channel conditions, and one full-channel condition. The full-channel condition contained both the nonverbal and verbal channels.

The two nonverbal channel conditions were as follows:

**Filtered audio channel.** Subjects were presented a tape recording of the soundtrack that had been subjected to an electronic filtering process. Frequencies below 100 Hz. and above 450 Hz., with a 72-decibel per octave
attenuation at the upper limit, were electronically removed. This process has been used by Starkweather (1956) and Strahan and Zytowski (1976) to eliminate the lexical, or semantic, meaning while retaining the vocal and affective communication (e.g., vocal variations in intensity and pitch, vocal segregates such as "uh-huh," hesitations, etc.). The removal of frequencies above 450 Hz. has most effect on consonants which are vital for speech intelligibility. It has less effect on vowel sounds and total voice power. Removing frequencies below 100 Hz., eliminated unwanted background noise.

**Visual channel.** Subjects were presented with the videotape only, without hearing the soundtrack.

The two verbal channel conditions were as follows:

**Transcript or lexical channel.** Subjects read a transcript of the soundtrack. All words that were intelligible were transcribed; no vocal cues (e.g., salesman is now laughing, he changed pitch level, etc.) were transcribed.

**Audio or vocal-lexical channel.** Subjects heard an unfiltered tape recording of the soundtrack.

The communication condition which included both nonverbal and verbal channels present was titled:

**Full-channel or visual-vocal-lexical channel.** In this condition, subjects were presented the videotape intact, receiving visual, vocal, and lexical cues in their natural combination.

**Subjects**

One-hundred-and-fifty undergraduate psychology students at the
University of Nebraska at Omaha served as subjects in this experiment. Selection was accomplished by telephoning students and asking for their help in a psychological study; extra credit points were awarded for participation. Approximately 80 percent of the students enrolled in introductory psychology that semester were telephoned. If the telephone was busy or no one was at home, one additional attempt was made. No systematic sequence to call students was used. An approximately equal number of males and females volunteered. Age, race, and sex were not controlled.

**Dependent Variables**

Each subject was given a 22-item Sales Questionnaire on which to record his or her responses. Items were constructed utilizing a nine-point, bipolar rating scale format. Three different categories of information were assessed by the questionnaire: (a) salesman persuasiveness, (b) salesman personality dimension characteristics, and (c) amount of information transmitted by each channel of communication. Since the Sales Questionnaire was developed by the author specifically for this study, its construction will be discussed extensively.

Research has shown that communicator credibility is associated with persuasiveness (cf., Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953; McGuire, 1973). Three personality characteristics compose communicator credibility: trustworthiness, expertise, and dynamism. Therefore, two questions on the Sales Questionnaire deal directly with salesman credibility, questions one (How knowledgeable was salesperson A of the product he was selling?) and three (How trustworthy do you perceive salesperson A to be?). In
addition to communicator credibility, many sales manuals and texts (cf., Baker & Phifer, 1966; Measuring Salesmen's Performance, 1965) stress the importance of a salesman showing sincere concern and interest for the customer and his or her special problems. Question two (Do you believe salesperson A was really interested in you and your specific problems?) attempts to measure this aspect. The final question in the "persuasiveness index" asks the subject, "If you were in the market, how likely are you to buy the product from salesperson A?" It was found when compiling data, these four questions were significantly intercorrelated (average correlation was .60); therefore, they were combined into one composite persuasiveness index score. Nunnally (1978) referred to this statistical process as the linear or summative model. It is this score that was used to measure salesman persuasiveness throughout the study. An analysis of the reliability of the persuasiveness index revealed an internal reliability of .85 ($p < .001$).

A second set of dependent measures assessed personality characteristics of each salesman. The personality dimension bipolar scales used in the questionnaire are based on unpublished research collected by Millimet (Note 3). Four personality dimensions arrived at through factor analysis are being assessed:

1. Person orientation (malicious-kindhearted, cruel-kind, inconsiderate-considerate, insincere-sincere);

2. Extraversion (shy-outgoing, silent-talkative, introverted-extraverted, quiet-loud);

3. Emotional stability (nervous-calm, tense-relaxed,
worried-carefree, frustrated-content);


The dichotomies used are the top factor loadings Millimet found in each of the four factors (a minimum of .42). Personality dichotomies in this study again were found to have high factor loadings on the same four dimensions; therefore, a general composite score was generated for each dimension and used as a dependent variable.

The subjects were also asked to rate the amount of information that was transmitted via the channel of communication they had "viewed." More specifically, information was broken down into two levels; (a) the amount of information provided about the product, and (b) the amount of information provided about the salesman. Again, ratings were on a nine-point, bipolar scale, ranging from "none at all" (1) to "very much" (9). (Refer to Appendixes G, H, and I for a detailed presentation of the Sales Questionnaire.)

Procedure

Fifteen treatment groups were formed, one for each channel of communication and performance level of salesmen. Treatment groups (consisting of 10 subjects per group) were then assigned at random to the experimental conditions. Thus, each group of subjects "viewed" only one salesman under one channel of communication.

The following instructions were read aloud by the experimenter to all the groups of subjects:

I am interested in assessing the persuasiveness of sales
presentations. You are about to view (hear or read) a sales presentation. During the presentation, the salesperson is interacting with a client, by the name of Ms. Carol Weeks, who is interested in buying the product the salesperson is selling. Put yourself in Ms. Weeks' shoes and likewise pretend that you are interested in buying the product.

After viewing (hearing or reading) the presentation, you will be given a questionnaire which will ask various questions about the salesperson's presentation. Try to mentally jot down reasons why you would want to buy, or not want to buy, from the salesperson. It is critical that you recall the salesperson individually, his strong points, his weak points, reasons for buying or not buying from him, etc.

Are there any questions?

Each group of subjects was then given the appropriate stimulus material. After presentation of the stimulus material, the Sales Questionnaire was administered. Upon completion of the questionnaire, the subjects were debriefed about the entirety of the study.

Results

Table 2 presents the means for subjects' ratings of salesmen persuasiveness in each treatment condition of the study. A summary table of the analysis of variance results for salesman persuasiveness and mode of presentation is illustrated in Table 3.

The results of the study are reviewed according to the order in which the hypotheses are stated.
Table 2
Treatment Group Means of Salesman Persuasiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modes of Presentation</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>Mean Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Filtered Audio</td>
<td>21.30</td>
<td>24.10</td>
<td>20.10</td>
<td>21.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>23.80</td>
<td>17.00</td>
<td>16.90</td>
<td>19.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcript</td>
<td>18.90</td>
<td>20.50</td>
<td>21.70</td>
<td>20.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio</td>
<td>26.20</td>
<td>22.40</td>
<td>27.50</td>
<td>25.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-channel</td>
<td>22.80</td>
<td>25.50</td>
<td>23.30</td>
<td>23.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Total</td>
<td>22.60</td>
<td>21.90</td>
<td>21.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

Analysis of Variance for Salesman Persuasiveness and Mode of Presentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Effects</td>
<td>768.73</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>128.12</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>752.40</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>188.10</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salesman</td>
<td>16.33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.17</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode-Salesman</td>
<td>602.00</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>75.25</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>.068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explained</td>
<td>1,370.73</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>97.91</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual (error)</td>
<td>5,418.47</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>40.14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6,789.20</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>45.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results for Hypothesis 1

To assess the impact of mode of presentation on salesman persuasiveness, a 3 x 5 (salesman x mode of presentation) factorial analysis of variance was performed. A significant main effect for mode of presentation was found ($p < .05$). Newman-Keuls analysis of the five modes of presentation indicated a number of significant differences at the $p < .05$ level. Results showed that: (a) the visual channel is significantly less persuasive than the full-channel and audio channel, and (b) the transcript or lexical channel is significantly less persuasive than the audio channel. The rank order of the means for modes of presentation from least persuasive to most persuasive was as follows: visual, transcript, filtered audio, full-channel, and audio. However, as indicated above, not all differences were significant. A graphical presentation of these results is shown in Appendix A.

The results also indicated that the summative persuasiveness of the nonverbal channels ($M = 20.53$) was not significantly different than the summative persuasiveness of the verbal channels ($M = 23.02$). The single degree of freedom comparisons test method (Myers, 1972) was used to test this relationship.

Results for Hypothesis 2

A nonsignificant main effect for salesmen was found. Salesman B and C had the same mean score (21.90), while salesman A's mean score was only .70 greater (22.60).

Results for Hypothesis 3

A nonsignificant effect ($p = .068$) was also found in the mode of
presentation/salesman interaction. The following three apriori minor hypotheses were investigated, even though the overall interaction was not significant. The results for these hypotheses are discussed together.

Results for Hypotheses 4, 5, and 6

All of these hypotheses were tested for statistical significance, using the single degree of freedom comparisons test method. The results, as shown in Table 4, indicate the following:

1. Salesman A's nonverbal persuasiveness score was not significantly greater than his verbal score, as the alternate hypothesis predicted. In fact, his nonverbal and verbal persuasiveness scores were identical (M = 22.55);

2. Salesman C's nonverbal persuasiveness score was significantly less than his verbal score, F(1, 135) = 9.27, p < .05;

3. Salesman A's nonverbal persuasiveness score was significantly greater than salesman C's nonverbal score, F(1, 135) = 4.09, p < .05. These latter two findings were predicted. (These simple effects interactions are plotted in Figure 1.)

Post Hoc Analysis Results

An attempt was made to determine whether a subject's sex, age, or race moderated the findings. One-way analysis of variance tests demonstrated that none of these subject variables significantly altered the persuasiveness scores (all ps > .25). (The results are shown in Appendix D.)

Personality correlates of salesman persuasiveness also were
Table 4

Group Means of Salesman Persuasiveness by Modes of Presentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modes of Presentation</th>
<th>Salesman A</th>
<th>Salesman B</th>
<th>Salesman C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nonverbal Channels</td>
<td>22.55</td>
<td>20.55</td>
<td>18.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Channels</td>
<td>22.55</td>
<td>21.45</td>
<td>24.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1. Mean salesman persuasiveness scores for verbal and nonverbal channels of communication.
examined. It was speculated that the salesmen's interpersonal
dynamics mediated their persuasiveness scores. Of the four personality
dimensions measured, none differed significantly between salesmen.
These relationships are presented in Table 5. Moreover, Appendix B
schematically shows these personality relationships. Among the four
personality dimensions, extraversion was consistently rated "by far"
higher than the other three dimensions. (See Appendix C.)

Collapsing across modes of presentation, there appeared to be
no relationship between amount of information provided (items 21 and
22) and salesman persuasiveness.

Discussion

The primary purpose of the present study was to explore the
relative importance of the nonverbal and verbal channels of communication
in the selling environment. The findings may be summarized in the
following six statements:

1. The channels of communication differed significantly in
amount of persuasiveness transmitted; specifically, the visual channel
was least persuasive and the audio channel was most persuasive.

2. The three salesmen used in the study did not significantly
vary in the overall amount of persuasiveness, summing across all
channels of communication.

3. No significant overall interaction was found for the salesman/
mode of presentation effect.

4. The successful salesman's persuasiveness transmitted nonverbally
was not significantly different from his persuasiveness transmitted
Table 5
Salesmen Personality Dimension Means Across Modes of Presentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person Orientation</td>
<td>25.04</td>
<td>22.54</td>
<td>22.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>26.62</td>
<td>28.78</td>
<td>26.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Stability</td>
<td>24.46</td>
<td>24.24</td>
<td>23.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Strength</td>
<td>24.60</td>
<td>25.70</td>
<td>24.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
verbally.

5. The unsuccessful salesman's persuasiveness transmitted nonverbally was significantly less than his verbally transmitted persuasiveness.

6. The successful salesman's nonverbally transmitted persuasiveness was significantly greater than the unsuccessful salesman's nonverbally transmitted persuasiveness.

Thus, alternate hypotheses 1, 5, and 6 were supported; whereas, alternate hypotheses 2, 3, and 4 were not supported.

It should be stressed that these findings are equivocal. A number of questions and contradictions are apparent in the results of this study. For example, why didn't NVC emerge as being more important in terms of persuasiveness generally? Why did the three salesmen, who differed in "real world" sales performance, not differ in overall persuasiveness as measured in the study? Why do the salesmen not differ in overall persuasiveness, yet differ significantly in verbal channel and nonverbal channel persuasiveness? Moreover, why did the successful salesman have equal ratings of persuasiveness in the verbal and nonverbal channels; whereas, the average salesman had slightly unequal and the unsuccessful salesman had very unequal ratings of persuasiveness between the verbal and nonverbal channels? Finally, how is the idea of nondiscrepancy connected to sales performance and persuasiveness, and does a nondiscrepancy model of communication effectiveness aid in answering any of these questions? The bulk of the discussion will be directed at answering these questions.
Before addressing these questions, however, the topic of communication modality persuasiveness will be discussed briefly. The question of which channels of communication are most/least persuasive has received some research attention, as indicated in the literature review. The results of the present study support the early work of Elliott (1937) and Knower (1935). The audio channel condition was perceived as significantly more persuasive than the transcript condition ($p < .05$). Perhaps, the reason for this is that subjects feel more anxiety and a greater pressure to conform in the more personalized and natural spoken word modality.

The present study also investigated other communication modalities, e.g., the filtered audio, visual, and full-channel conditions. It was demonstrated that the visual channel was least persuasive, followed by the transcript, filtered audio, full-channel, and audio channels, respectively. It may appear surprising that the full-channel condition was actually less persuasive in this study than the audio channel. Evidently, the other communication channels debilitated the audio portion of the full-channel condition. In other words, visual and vocal cues in the full-channel condition may have distracted the participants from understanding the salesman’s verbal message, thereby decreasing persuasiveness.

An unexpected result in the study was the nonsignificant difference between the summative verbal channel (transcript plus audio) and nonverbal channel (filtered audio plus visual) persuasiveness. Previous research by Mehrabian and his colleagues (Mehrabian &
Ferris, 1967; Mehrabian & Wiener, 1967) found the nonverbal portion of communication as more influential than the verbal portion. Also, Birdwhistell (1970), Knapp (1972), and others attributed greater importance to NVC. In this study, both were found to be "equally" important to perceived persuasiveness.

Why didn't NVC emerge as being more important than it did in terms of overall persuasiveness? Perhaps, the potency of NVC has been overemphasized. Many researchers who have advocated the superiority of NVC (e.g., Birdwhistell, 1970; Mehrabian & Ferris, 1967) have studied the communication process under artificial, laboratory situations. (Refer to discussion on page 5.) Those researchers who have concluded both verbal and NVC were important in the communication process (e.g., Greene, 1977; Tepper & Haase, 1978) have investigated communication under more naturalistic environments. The present study also supports the latter viewpoint.

The salesmen videotaped in the study were actual sales accountants at Northwestern Bell, selected solely and objectively upon their sales performance. It was, therefore, assumed they would be perceived as being more or less persuasive, relative to their performance record, or, at the very least, that they would differ significantly in their persuasiveness. This was not the case; all three salesmen were perceived as being nearly equal in persuasiveness, summing across all channels of communication.

There are several reasons which may account for this nonsignificant difference in overall persuasiveness between salesmen. First, perhaps
the criteria (i.e., theory) used in constructing the persuasiveness index measure was faulty. This seems to be highly unlikely, however, since numerous studies have found communicator trustworthiness, knowledge, etc. to be vital in persuasiveness. A second possibility is that the sales persuasiveness index, itself, is unreliable and/or invalid. A reliability check indicated an internal reliability of .85; thus, minimizing this possibility. The invalidity of any instrument is always a matter for concern. On the other hand, the questionnaire items of the index were generated directly from a highly empirically tested, well-accepted theory. Third, maybe the experimental design employed in the study was poor. Due to the interactive nature of verbal communication and NVC, it may be misleading to assume one can add the components of communication and arrive at the "whole." The Gestalt approach may be operative. Therefore, although it was statistically permissible to sum various channel persuasiveness mean ratings, different results may have emerged if the channels were presented concurrently.

Communication is a complex and compensatory process; merely adding the parts may not subsume the whole.

On the other hand, if one looks at the full-channel condition (which includes verbal and NVC channels in their natural combination), again no difference in persuasiveness scores between salesmen surfaces. Thus, it appears that adding the channel persuasiveness ratings together did not adversely alter the study's results.

Another explanation as to why the salesmen did not differ significantly in overall persuasiveness again relates to poor experimental
design. It was assumed the three salesmen actually did differ in their overall persuasiveness prior to experimentation. At the time, it seemed logical to infer that by selecting successful, average, and unsuccessful salesmen one would also select salesmen who differed correspondingly in overall persuasiveness. This may not necessarily be true. A number of variables affect sales output, of which salesman overall persuasiveness is only one. For example, individual variables (such as motivation, age, sex, education, etc.), organizational variables (such as work conditions, company image, etc.) and situational variables (such as economic conditions, competition, clients' needs, etc.) may all interact to alter salesman performance. In fact, performance may be independent of salesman overall persuasiveness.

Although a number of these variables have been measured or controlled in the study, several confounding variables also exist (see Appendix E). It was an invalid assumption to conclude that sales performance is directly related to salesman overall persuasiveness; several other variables could also potentially account for a salesman's high, average, or low performance. Thus, it seems most reasonable to deduce that salesmen did not differ in overall persuasiveness, and that it was some other variable(s) which caused them to vary in sales performance.

However, why do the salesmen, who do not vary in overall persuasiveness, differ significantly in verbal channel and nonverbal channel persuasiveness? The author does not have the answer; only speculation can be given.

Overall persuasiveness is composed of two entities in this study;
verbal channel persuasiveness and nonverbal channel persuasiveness. It seems logical that a salesman can be very weak in one area of communication and very strong in another area, with varying degrees between the two depending upon the particular salesman. If this is the case, it is possible that total (i.e., overall) persuasiveness may be relatively equal between individuals, yet be arrived at by varying degrees of verbal and nonverbal persuasiveness. This would account for the differing channel persuasiveness scores and also the nearly equal overall persuasiveness between salesmen.

Two ancillary measures were used in the study and neither differentiated the salesmen. The four personality characteristics assessed were not significantly different between salesmen. In addition, the subject's sex, age, and race made no difference in the way he perceived the salesmen.

The only variable measured which significantly differed between salesmen was the combination of nonverbal and verbal persuasiveness scores. If overall persuasiveness is unrelated to salesman performance, could it be that verbal and nonverbal channel persuasiveness are important as unidimensional entities? The minor hypotheses were used to examine this question. Figure 1 visually displays the relationships of the minor hypotheses (see page 36). The intriguing aspect of these verbal and NVC relationships is the gradual increasing discrepancy between verbal and nonverbal perceived persuasiveness as one moves from the successful to the average to the unsuccessful salesman. The successful salesman has the same mean persuasiveness scores ($M = 22.55$) for the
verbal and nonverbal channels. The average salesman has slightly different persuasiveness scores ($M = 21.45$ and $M = 20.55$) for the verbal and nonverbal channels, respectively. On the other hand, look at the wide disparity between verbal and nonverbal channel persuasiveness in the unsuccessful salesman ($Ms$ of $24.60$ and $18.50$, respectively). There is a large, statistically significant ($p < .05$) gap between his two communication systems.

Perhaps, overall persuasiveness is not the correct criterion to use when attempting to differentiate salesman performance. It may be that the quantity of persuasiveness overall is not nearly as critical as the mixture of verbal and NVC persuasiveness. However, the data are not clear cut. One possibility is that a "balance" exists between the verbal and NVC systems, and the more discrepancy between systems the poorer a salesman's performance is apt to be. Another possibility is that a certain minimal level of NVC persuasiveness is required and unless this level is reached sales success is debilitated. A third possibility is that unless a minimal level of both verbal and nonverbal persuasiveness is achieved, salesman performance will be decreased. Finally, it may be that too much verbal persuasiveness acts as a reactance agent, thereby decreasing performance.

The possibility of a "nondiscrepancy model" of communication, however, is intriguing. It seems most reasonable to speak in terms of a total communication process, subsuming the verbal and NVC systems. When there is little or no discrepancy between the systems (as in the successful salesman), communication effectiveness is enhanced and
performance increases. When there is a lot of discrepancy between the systems (as in the unsuccessful salesman), communication effectiveness is debilitated and performance decreases. Thus, it would appear unwise to concentrate on verbal communication and neglect NVC (or vice versa) if this model is accurate. Both systems work together, and it is not the quantity of persuasiveness per se which matters in successful salesmanship but the relative quantity of one to the other.

There are a number of questions which cast serious doubt upon the nondiscrepancy model of effective communication and successful salesmanship. First, the data showed no significant differences in persuasiveness for salesmen A, B, and C in either the full-channel condition, or when summing across all channels. Is it possible quantity of persuasiveness is unimportant and, instead, the mixture of verbal versus nonverbal persuasiveness is the crucial variable? Can individuals consciously perceive them as separate entities? Second, the other three possibilities stated earlier also account for the results? Why should more faith be placed in the nondiscrepancy model than the other possibilities? Finally and perhaps most serious, there are a number of factors which alter salesman performance. It would be naive to believe verbal and NVC discrepancy is the only factor, or for that matter, the major factor.

Nevertheless, a few recent studies in the NVC area have stressed the concept of consistency between nonverbal and verbal communication (Graves & Robinson, 1976; Greene, 1977; Tepper & Haase, 1978). These studies, although methodologically different from the present study in that verbal and nonverbal cues were carefully manipulated by the
experimenter, may shed some light upon the phenomenon of communication channel nondiscrepancy. The above researchers have found that an interdependence exists between the two systems and an agreement between them enhances communicator effectiveness.

For example, Greene manipulated a counselor's verbal (i.e., evaluative feedback) and nonverbal (i.e., interpersonal distance) communication and found that consistent verbal and NVC lead to increased counselor compliance; whereas, inconsistent communication lead to decreased counselor compliance. Likewise, Graves and Robinson obtained supportive results. Interestingly, they found the worst (i.e., the greatest interpersonal distances) condition occurred when the communicator was verbally positive and nonverbally negative. This is similar to the successful salesman's persuasiveness scores, which were high in the verbal channels and low in the nonverbal channels.

However, the reader is cautioned concerning the above model; it is speculatory. No other similar research has been conducted in the sales area to the author's knowledge. In addition, the results are based on salesman samples of N = 1 for each treatment condition. No conclusions should be drawn from these results. A number of questions are raised; these must be empirically answered before any model is espoused.

Implications of the Study

The implications of this study could be far-reaching. For decades, authors have pointed out the importance of verbal communication in sales. Nonverbal communication was merely mentioned, or frequently not mentioned at all. This study has posed numerous questions concerning the superiority
Nonverbal Communication

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of verbal communication in selling. Indeed, the nondiscrepancy model would assert that NVC is as vital as verbal communication. In any case, the time has come for managers in sales organizations to begin seriously considering the importance of NVC. To merely focus on the verbal aspects of salesmanship, may short change the employee as well as the organization.

Furthermore, researchers and business executives have attempted to predict the success of salespersons for a long time. Oftentimes, few if any valid predictors are found (e.g., Greenberg & Greenberg, 1976; Turnbull, 1976). Perhaps, an accurate predictor of sales success would be a videotape of an applicant systematically evaluated for nonverbal and verbal communication nondiscrepancy.

Limitations of the Study

The study has four limitations. First, interpersonal distance between salesperson and buyer may be extremely important in persuasion. Due to the videotaping procedures, it was not possible to include this communicative element in the design. Second, only males were videotaped for the study. Perhaps, if saleswomen were employed, different results may have been obtained. In a field study, Dion and Stein (1978) found sex of the communicator was a contributing factor in persuasiveness. Third, the salesmen were restricted to a five-minute sales presentation, covering only the orientation phase. Perhaps, this is not an adequate sample of time to assess the persuasiveness of a salesman. Fourth, this study is not measuring a salesperson's capability to decode and understand the prospective buyer's NVC, or verbal communication for that
matter. Selling is an interactive process; the buyer and seller interact and react to one another's cues. Unfortunately, this aspect of the salesman's ability cannot be measured with the paradigm, although this facet may be very important.

There is an obvious need for further research along these lines. Clearly, the interpersonal communication process is complex. The importance of nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions, posture, eye contact, and so forth, has been well-documented in the NVC literature. It is hoped this will permeate the persuasion literature as well.

This investigation has raised numerous questions, but unfortunately, answered few of them. It is hoped this exploratory study will stimulate additional research in this area, which in time will lead to a better understanding of NVC in sales.
Reference Notes

1. Two books have been published in the 1970s that contain much anecdotal evidence about the importance of NVC in selling:
   (a) J. Fast's *Body Language*, and (b) J. Molloy's *Dress for Success*.

2. Spear, R. Personal communication, October 6, 1977.

References


Hamid, P. N. Style of dress as a perceptual cue in impression formation. Perceptual and Motor Skills, 1968, 26, 904-906.


Mehrabian, A. Inference of attitudes from the posture, orientation, and distance of a communicator. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 1968, 32, 296-308. (a)
Mehrabian, A. Relationship of attitude to seated posture, orientation, and distance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1968, 10, 26-30. (b)


Appendix A

Mode Persuasive Index Score Means Across Salesmen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Presentation</th>
<th>Persuasive Index Mean Scores</th>
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<tr>
<td>Filtered Audio</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Transcript</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio</td>
<td>25.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Channel</td>
<td>24.87</td>
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</table>
Appendix B

Salesman Personality Dimension and Persuasive Index Means

Across Modes of Presentation

PERSONALITY DIMENSIONS AND PERSUASIVENESS

Salesman A
Salesman B
Salesman C
Appendix C

Personality Dimension and Persuasive Index

Score Means Across Salesmen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality Dimension</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Stability</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person Orientation</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive Index</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SALESMAN
Appendix D

Oneway Analysis of Variance Persuasiveness Results for Subject Sex, Age, and Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sign.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>6,783.63</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>45.84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6,789.38</td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>123.19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>61.59</td>
<td>1.358</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>6,666.19</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>45.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6,789.38</td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>14.50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.25</td>
<td>.157</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>6,774.88</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>46.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6,789.38</td>
<td>149</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Appendix E

An Abbreviated List of Variables Which May Affect Salesman Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Variables</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Motivation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Aptitudes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*6. Four personality characteristics measured</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Other personality characteristics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*8. Amount of information given about product</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*9. Overall persuasiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*10. Balance of verbal and NVC persuasiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Variables</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>**1. Company image</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**2. Product itself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**3. Work conditions (e.g., supervision, company size, company structure)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situational Variables</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>**1. Competition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**2. Clients' needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**3. Number of clients</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**4. Economic conditions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Variables measured in study

**Variables controlled for in study by Bell Telephone formula
I am interested in the selection process of salespersons; how interviewers go about selecting one person over the other, and why. In order to assess this process, videotaped presentations of salespersons "actually selling their product" will be used.

Each of you will be given a case history of a potential client, the Grinnell Company. You will be individually videotaped as you present your sales presentation. However, because a presentation frequently lasts a couple of hours, I am only concerned with videotaping the introduction or orientation phase. You will be, therefore, videotaped for only five minutes during the beginning of your presentation.

Imagine this as an "authentic sale" and act just like this is a sale you go through every day. Carol Weeks, the president of Grinnell Company, will be the person to whom you will be directing your sales presentation. You may ask her any questions you feel necessary; however, her responses will be short. In other words, you are to do most of the talking.
Case Study of Grinnell Company
Grinnell Company is a relatively small corporation located on the outskirts of Chicago, Illinois. It has been in business for almost 100 years; however, in the last ten years it has not experienced much growth. Three years ago a small conglomerate, Beardslee Inc., purchased 90% of the family stock for $275,000. The remaining 10% is owned by family members and past corporate executives.

Grinnell is in the plastics industry. They manufacture and market primarily those plastic packaging rings that hold the cans together in a six-pack. Their clientele are mainly the brewery and soft-drink industries. The market territory encompasses the entire United States, with a concentration of sales efforts in Ohio, Illinois, California, and Georgia. Sales representatives do all the selling.

**Key Grinnell Company Personnel**

- President: Carol Weeks
- Vice-president: David Beardslee II
- Marketing Manager: Lois Luthy
- Office Manager: Richard Johnson

**Plastics Industry Information**

The field in general has increased tremendously in the last ten years, particularly in the packaging end dealing in the beverage industry. The industry has experienced strong competition from abroad. Likewise, prices have gone up because of petroleum costs. The industrial outlook is still very good, however. There is a projected six to eight percent annual increase in sales.
Present Grinnell Business Conditions

Grinnell has been static for ten years; they have not grown in either total sales or percent of the market. Their return on investment is low. They appear to have a fairly high debt ratio and may be having problems meeting current liabilities. They have some loans outstanding in the local area but nothing big.

Their sales/expense ratio is very high; their sales representatives are doing an inefficient job. In addition, they are suffering from:

(1) an inadequate market coverage,
(2) no new customer prospecting,
(3) loss of long-established accounts,
(4) being in a bad cash position because of slow payments.

In an interview with David Beardslee two weeks ago, you learned that they are disenchanted with their present 10-button communication sets. The intercom is especially a "bottleneck." However, until financial conditions permit, they will "keep plugging along" with their present system.

Mr. Beardslee stated that Grinnell realizes the poor financial and marketing situation it is in and is committed to make a change. They are willing to spend, but only if they can see a return within reason. When asked if Beardslee, Inc. controlled Grinnell's resource capital, he replied that there is local decision making authority.

Mr. Beardslee continued by pointing out additional Grinnell problems:

(1) There is little control over the sales representatives.
(2) Oftentimes when accounts are lost, no follow-up study (as to why)
is undertaken.

(3) Out of the 8,000 possible accounts, Grinnell has only 1,600. They have the information on many of the other accounts, but they are not buying from Grinnell.

(4) There is much unused capacity in production; plant facilities are 25% underemployed.

During the interview, Beardslee asserted that he would like to see more time spent searching for new accounts and also more time spent seeing larger accounts.

Present Communication Equipment

5 local lines
12 stations
intercom

(Long distance expenditures: December, $109.50; January, $121.00; February, $87.00; March, $142.50. Distribution bands 1 - 2 - 5: spread out; no particular concentrations.)

Grinnell Goals and Objectives

(1) Minimum 9-10% return on investment, presently 7.5%.

(2) Sales volume increase to $1,300,000 annually for next three years, presently $750,000 annually.

(3) Eliminate need to borrow money to meet current expenses.

(4) Capture a larger share of the market, particularly at the expense of foreign competition.

(5) Develop a more satisfactory method of selling the existing product line.
Appendix G

Sales Questionnaire for Salesman A

Sex: (a) Male (b) Female
Age: (a) Under 20 (b) 20 to 30 (c) Over 30
Race: (a) Black (b) White (c) Other

Part 1.

Directions: Answer the following questions by circling the number which best matches your answer. Base your answers on how you feel about that particular question. Please take your time and answer all the questions as truthfully as possible.

1. How knowledgeable was salesperson A of the product he was selling?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

   Extremely Ignorant
   (was not familiar at all with the product)

   Extremely Knowledgeable
   (understood the product's strong and weak points)

2. Do you believe salesperson A was really interested in you and your specific problems?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

   No, was just interested in
   making another sale

   Yes, really wanted to help and do all he could for me

3. How trustworthy do you perceive salesperson A to be?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

   Extremely Untrustworthy
   (would handle customer complaints only after continuous nagging)

   Extremely Trustworthy
   (would handle all customer complaints promptly and reliably)
4. If you were in the market, how likely are you to buy the product from salesperson A?

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7 & 8 & 9 \\
\end{array}
\]

Very Unlikely (would not buy now or in the future)

Very Likely (would buy immediately)

Part 2.

Directions: In questions 5 through 20, describe salesperson A.

5. Sincere: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Insincere

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

6. Shy: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Outgoing

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

7. Nervous: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Calm

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

8. Weak: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Strong

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

9. Talkative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Silent

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

10. Tense: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Relaxed

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

11. Rugged: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Feeble

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

12. Cruel: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Kind

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

13. Content: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Frustrated

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

14. Bold: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Meek

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

15. Considerate: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Inconsiderate

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

16. Quiet: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Loud

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
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17. Powerless: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______: Powerful
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

18. Kindhearted: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______: Malicious
   9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

19. Introverted: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______: Extraverted
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

20. Worried: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______: Carefree
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Part 3.
Directions: In questions 21 and 22, specify the amount of information conveyed by this mode of communication.

21. How much information about the product was provided by this mode of communication?

   : _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ ______: 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

   None at all
   (I was just guessing when marking answers to all of the above questions)

   Very Much
   (I had ample information to answer all of the above questions)

22. How much information about the salesperson was provided by this mode of communication?

   : _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ ______: 
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

   None at all
   (I was just guessing when marking answers to all of the above questions)

   Very Much
   (I had ample information to answer all of the above questions)
Appendix H

Sales Questionnaire for Salesman B

Sex:  (a) Male  (b) Female

Age:  (a) Under 20  (b) 20 to 30  (c) Over 30

Race:  (a) Black  (b) White  (c) Other

Part 1.

Directions: Answer the following questions by circling the number which best matches your answer. Base your answers on how you feel about that particular question. Please take your time and answer all the questions as truthfully as possible.

1. How knowledgeable was salesperson B of the product he was selling?

   :________________________:
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9

   Extremely Ignorant  (was not familiar at all with the product)

   Extremely Knowledgeable  (understood the product's strong and weak points)

2. Do you believe salesperson B was really interested in you and your specific problems?

   :________________________:
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9

   No, was just interested in making another sale

   Yes, really wanted to help and do all he could for me

3. How trustworthy do you perceive salesperson A to be?

   :________________________:
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9

   Extremely Untrustworthy  (would handle customer complaints only after continuous nagging)

   Extremely Trustworthy  (would handle all customer complaints promptly and reliably)
4. If you were in the market, how likely are you to buy the product from salesperson B?

\[\begin{array}{cccccccc}
1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7 & 8 \\
\text{Very Unlikely (would not buy now or in the future)} & & & & & & & \\
\text{Very Likely (would buy immediately)}
\end{array}\]

Part 2.
Directions: In questions 5 through 20, describe salesperson B.

5. Sincere : Insincere

6. Shy : Outgoing

7. Nervous : Calm

8. Weak : Strong

9. Talkative : Silent

10. Tense : Relaxed

11. Rugged : Feeble

12. Cruel : Kind

13. Content : Frustrated

14. Bold : Meek

15. Considerate : Inconsiderate

16. Quiet : Loud
17. Powerless: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9: Powerful

18. Kindhearted: 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1: Malicious

19. Introverted: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9: Extraverted

20. Worried: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9: Carefree

Part 3.
Directions: In questions 21 and 22, specify the amount of information conveyed by this mode of communication.

21. How much information about the product was provided by this mode of communication?

None at all
(I was just guessing when marking answers to all of the above questions)

Very Much
(I had ample information to answer all of the above questions)

22. How much information about the salesperson was provided by this mode of communication?

None at all
(I was just guessing when marking answers to all of the above questions)

Very Much
(I had ample information to answer all of the above questions)
Appendix I

Sales Questionnaire for Salesman C

Sex: (a) Male (b) Female

Age: (a) Under 20 (b) 20 to 30 (c) Over 30

Race: (a) Black (b) White (c) Other

Part 1.

Directions: Answer the following questions by circling the number which best matches your answer. Base your answers on how you feel about that particular question. Please take your time and answer all the questions as truthfully as possible.

1. How knowledgeable was salesperson C of the product he was selling?

   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9

   Extremely Ignorant (was not familiar at all with the product)  Extremely Knowledgeable (understood the product's strong and weak points)

2. Do you believe salesperson C was really interested in you and your specific problems?

   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9

   No, was just interested in making another sale  Yes, really wanted to help and do all he could for me

3. How trustworthy do you perceive salesperson C to be?

   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9

   Extremely Untrustworthy (would handle customer complaints only after continuous nagging)  Extremely Trustworthy (would handle all customer complaints promptly and reliably)
4. If you were in the market, how likely are you to buy the product from salesperson C?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Very Unlikely 
(would not buy now 
or in the future)

Very Likely 
(would buy immediately)

Part 2.
Directions: In questions 5 through 20, describe salesperson C.

5. Sincere: 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1: Insincere

6. Shy: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9: Outgoing

7. Nervous: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9: Calm

8. Weak: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9: Strong

9. Talkative: 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1: Silent

10. Tense: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9: Relaxed

11. Rugged: 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1: Feeble

12. Cruel: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9: Kind

13. Content: 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1: Frustrated

14. Bold: 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1: Meek

15. Considerate: 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1: Inconsiderate

16. Quiet: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9: Loud
17.  Powerless: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______: Powerful
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

18. Kindhearted: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______: Malicious
9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

19. Introverted: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______: Extraverted
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

20. Worried: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______: Carefree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Part 3.
Directions: In questions 21 and 22, specify the amount of information conveyed by this mode of communication.

21. How much information about the product was provided by this mode of communication?

: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______:
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

None at all
(I was just guessing when marking answers to all of the above questions)

Very Much
(I had ample information to answer all of the above questions)

22. How much information about the salesperson was provided by this mode of communication?

: _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______ _______:
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

None at all
(I was just guessing when marking answers to all of the above questions)

Very Much
(I had ample information to answer all of the above questions)