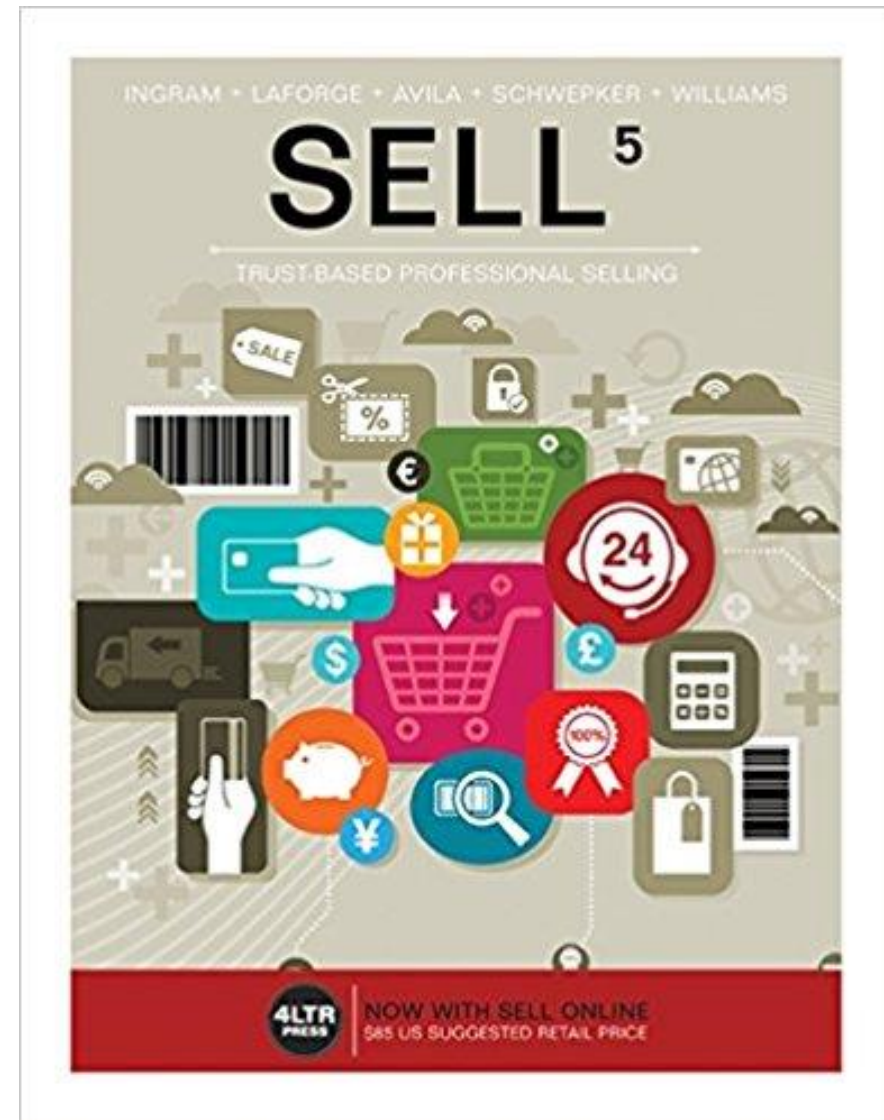


# Chapter 4 Communication Skills



# LEARNING OUTCOMES

- 1 Explain the importance of **collaborative, two-way communication** in trust-based selling
- 2 Explain the primary **types of questions** and how they are **applied in selling**
- 3 Illustrate the **diverse roles and uses of strategic questioning** in trust-based selling
- 4 Identify and describe the **five steps of the ADAPT** questioning sequence for effective fact-finding and needs discovery

# LEARNING OUTCOMES

- 5 Discuss the four sequential steps for effective active listening
- 6 Discuss the superiority of pictures over words for explaining concepts and enhancing comprehension
- 7 Describe and interpret the different forms of nonverbal communication

# Class Exercise

- Divide into groups of three to five. Next, look at the phrases listed below. Take five minutes to list as many different meanings as possible from the phrase.
- You can use verbal and nonverbal variations to convey different meanings.
- Articulate the phrase with a meaning that has not already been offered by another group.
- Tell the class the meaning you hope to convey and then attempt to convey it.
- We will decide whether your group was successful.

## Phrases

- Hello
- I like you
- Nice sweater
- I'm not ready to buy
- I can find it somewhere for less

# Sales Communication is a Collaborative Process

## At the heart of the relationship building process is collaborative conversation

- Interactive conversation focused on learning more about the buyer
  - Buyer situation and needs
  - Demonstrating a sincere and empathetic interest in the buyer's well being.
  - Talking with rather than at the customer
  - Two-way and collaborative

## Trust Based Communication

- Collaborative and two-way form of communication
  - Produced or conducted by **two or more parties working together**.
  - Allows buyers and sellers to understand the need by working **together** to create the best solution for customers
- Salespeople must **ask carefully crafted questions** to the customer to:
  - Elicit information from a prospective buyer
  - **Redirect, regain, or hold the buyer's attention**

# Trust Based Sales Communication

## Verbal Dimension of Communication

1. Developing effective questioning methods for use in uncovering and diagnosing buyers' needs and expectations
2. Using active listening skills to facilitate the interchange of ideas and information
3. Maximizing the responsive dissemination of information to buyers in a way that fully explains and brings to life the benefits of proposed solutions

- **Non-Verbal dimension of interpersonal communication**

- Application and meaningful interpretation (later in course)

1.

Survey Questions

1. Are you greeted / acknowledged when you enter the bank?  
☐ Always ☐ Often ☐ Seldom ☐ Never
2. Is your business handled efficiently and in a timely manner?  
☐ Always ☐ Often ☐ Seldom ☐ Never
3. Teller friendly and courteous?  
☐ Always ☐ Often ☐ Seldom ☐ Never
4. Teller / bank officer have knowledge of bank products and services?  
☐ Always ☐ Often ☐ Seldom ☐ Never
5. Did teller / bank officer offer additional products?  
☐ Always ☐ Often ☐ Seldom ☐ Never
6. Is bank facility clean and orderly?  
☐ Always ☐ Often ☐ Seldom ☐ Never

2.



3.



### Forms of nonverbal communication

- Eye Contact
- Facial Expressions
- Posture
- Haptics or Touch
- Gestures
- Personal Space



# REMEMBER...

- We don't buy products... rather, **we seek out the satisfaction and benefits that certain product features provide.**
- Trust based sales communication is the **sharing of meaning** between buying and selling individuals that results from the interactive process of **exchanging information and ideas.**
  - Purpose of sales communication is not agreement but rather the maximization of **common understanding** among participants.
- Effective selling requires:
  - Questioning
  - Listening
  - Giving information
  - Nonverbal communication
  - Written communication

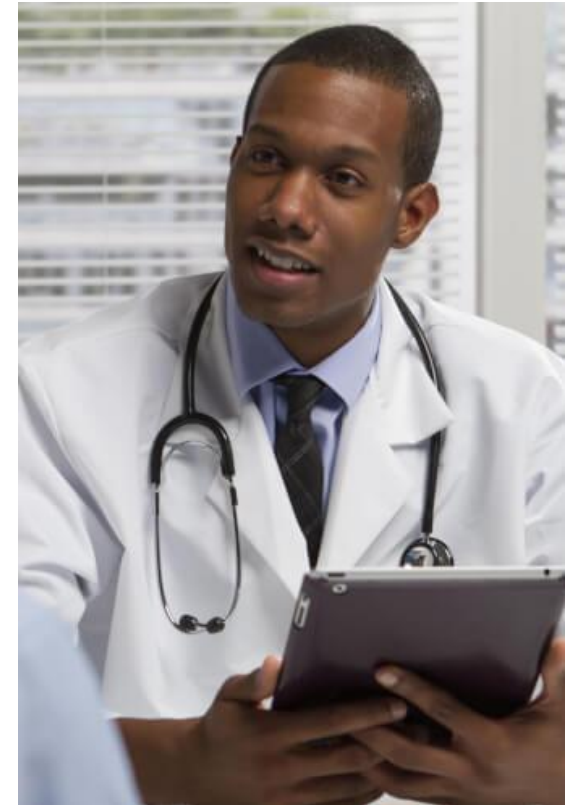


Effective selling requires:

- **Questioning**
- Listening
- Giving information
- Nonverbal communication
- Written communication

## Verbal Communication: Questioning

- There are two ways to dominate and control a sales situation
  1. Salesperson talks all the time (*not good*)
  2. Salesperson can maintain a subtle level of control by **asking** well thought out questions that guide the discussion and engage the customer
- Think like a doctor: ask relevant questions to methodically diagnose the situation and problems before presenting solutions.
  - Never present a cure or prescription without understanding the situation or problem.



# Salespeople are like doctors

- *Salespeople must be masters at thinking through what they need to know, planning the questions they need to ask, and then asking those diagnostic questions in a sequential manner that builds understanding of the situation for themselves as well as for the customer.*

## Practice

A man walks into Banana Republic and says... I need an outfit.

What do you say next?

What questions are you going to ask to diagnose his "problem"

Are your questions going to be different if he is in a suit vs. work boots, greasy jeans and a ripped tee-shirt?





Purposeful, carefully crafted questions can **Encourage** thoughtful responses from a buyer and provide richly detailed information around buyer's current situation, needs, and expectations



Facilitate both the buyer and seller understanding of a problem and its possible solutions



Shows interest in the buyer and his/her needs



Actively involves the buyer in the selling process



Use to redirect, regain and hold buyer's attention



Provide a convenient and subtle transition to a different topic of discussion

# Why are questions so important?

# Types of Questions Based on the Amount and Specific type of Information Desired

## Open-End questions

Nondirective question  
Used early in the sales process

Designed to let the customer respond freely

Encourage buyers' thought processes and deliver richer and more expansive information

Secret: use these words to begin...  
what, how, where, when, tell, describe and why

## Closed-End Questions

Designed to limit the customers' response to one or two words

Typically used to confirm or clarify information

Common questions include: Do you? Are you? How many? How often?

## Dichotomous/Multiple Choice Questions

This type of question asks a customer to choose from two or more options

Used in selling to discover customer preferences and move the purchase decision process forward

Which do you prefer, the \_\_\_\_ or the \_\_\_\_?

# Types of Questions based on Strategic Purpose

- If you want to penetrate deep and get more detailed information from your customer with details and information
  - = **ASK PROBING QUESTIONS**
- If you want to confirm your understanding of a customer situation or problem
  - = **ASK EVALUATIVE QUESTIONS**
- If you want change topics or redirect a buyer's attention
  - = **ASK TACTICAL QUESTIONS**
- If you want to follow up on something you buyer previously said
  - = **ASK REACTIVE QUESTIONS**

# Types of Questions Based on Strategic Purpose

## Probing question

- Designed to elicit more articulate and precise details from buyer

## Evaluative question

- Uses open-end and closed-end question formats to discover attitudes, opinions, and preferences that the prospect holds

## Tactical question

- Used to shift the topic when the conversation goes off course

## Reactive question

- Question based on the information provided previously by the other party

# Types of Questions: Strategic Purpose

- **Probing Questions** – designed to penetrate below generalized or superficial information
  - They are especially useful during need discovery and objection handling
- 
- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
    - “Can you share an example of that with me?”
  - 2. \_\_\_\_\_
    - “How are you dealing with that situation now?”
  - 3. \_\_\_\_\_
    - “So, if I understand you correctly... Is that right?”
  - 4. \_\_\_\_\_
    - “What are your past experiences?”



# Types of Questions: Strategic Purpose

- **Evaluative Questions** – use open- and closed-end question formats to discover attitudes, opinions, and preferences of customer.
- They go beyond fact finding and uncover a buyer's perceptions and feelings regarding existing and desired circumstances and potential solutions
- They can be either open or close ended.
  - *"How do you feel about...?"*
  - *"Do you see the merits of...?"*
  - *"What do you think...?"*
  - *"Do you believe this is something..."*



# Types of Questions: Strategic Purpose

- **Tactical Questions** – used to shift or redirect the topic of discussion when it gets off track.
- Used when the present topic is of little value or is non-productive.
  - *"Earlier you mentioned that..."*
  - *"Could you tell me more about how that might affect..."*
  - *"You said that you can see the merit...."*



# Types of Questions: Strategic Purpose

- *Probing Questions*
- *Evaluative Questions*
- *Tactical Questions*
- Salespeople use reactive questions when responding to information provided by the buyer.
- Typically, salespeople use these questions to get the buyer to elaborate on something he or she just said.
  - *"You mentioned that ... Can you give me an example of what you mean?"*
  - *"That is interesting. Can you tell me how it happened?"*
  - *"Can we go back to something you said a moment ago, and share with me a situation..."*



# Guidelines for Combining Types of Questions for Maximal Effectiveness

## EXHIBIT 4.1

## Guidelines for Combining Types of Questions

		Strategic Objective or Purpose of Questioning			
		Explore and Dig for Details	Gain Confirmation and Discover Attitudes/Opinions	Change Topics or Redirect Buyer's Attention	Follow-up Previously Elicited Statements
Amount and Specificity of Information Desired	Discussion and Interpretation	<i>Open-end</i> questions designed to be <i>Probing</i> in nature	<i>Open-end</i> questions designed to be <i>Evaluative</i> in nature	<i>Open-end</i> questions designed to be <i>Tactical</i> in nature	<i>Open-end</i> questions designed to be <i>Reactive</i> in nature
	Confirmation and Agreement	<i>Closed-end</i> questions designed to be <i>Probing</i> in nature	<i>Closed-end</i> questions designed to be <i>Evaluative</i> in nature	<i>Closed-end</i> questions designed to be <i>Tactical</i> in nature	<i>Closed-end</i> questions designed to be <i>Reactive</i> in nature
	Choosing from Alternatives	<i>Dichotomous</i> or <i>Multiple-choice</i> questions designed to be <i>Probing</i> in nature	<i>Dichotomous</i> or <i>Multiple-choice</i> questions designed to be <i>Evaluative</i> in nature	<i>Dichotomous</i> or <i>Multiple-choice</i> questions designed to be <i>Tactical</i> in nature	<i>Dichotomous</i> or <i>Multiple-choice</i> questions designed to be <i>Reactive</i> in nature

# Strategic Application of Questioning in Trust Based Selling

- Effective questioning skills are indispensable in selling and are used to address critical issues throughout all stages of the selling process.
- When asking questions... make sure to
- Generate buyer involvement
- Provoke thinking
- Gather information
- Clarification and emphasis
- Show interest.
- Gain confirmation
- Advance the sale

- Instruct students break into groups
- One person in the group is the buyer, the other is the seller
- The buyer walks into an Apple store
- The seller must ask different types of questions to understand what the buyer needs.
- If you want to penetrate deep and get more detailed information from your customer with details and information
  - = **ASK PROBING QUESTIONS**
- If you want to confirm your understanding of a customer situation or problem
  - = **ASK EVALUATIVE QUESTIONS**
- If you want change topics or redirect a buyer's attention
  - = **ASK TACTICAL QUESTIONS**
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	Choosing from Alternatives	Dichotomous or Multiple-choice questions designed to be <i>Probing</i> in nature	Dichotomous or Multiple-choice questions designed to be <i>Evaluative</i> in nature	Dichotomous or Multiple-choice questions designed to be <i>Tactical</i> in nature	Dichotomous or Multiple-choice questions designed to be <i>Reactive</i> in nature

# SPIN

A questioning system that sequences four types of questions designed to:

1. Uncover a buyer's current situation and inherent problems
2. Enhance the buyer's understanding of the consequences and implications of those problems
3. Leads to the proposed solution

## Types of Questions under SPIN

**S**ituation

**P**roblem

**I**mplication

**N**eed-payoff

# SPIN Selling

- **Situation questions**—are fact-finding questions that ask the buyer to provide information about his or her background and/or existing situation. “Who are your current suppliers?” and “What methods of advertising do you use currently?” are examples of situation questions.
- **Problem questions**—probe the buyer for specific difficulties or areas of dissatisfaction. “Have you ever had any problems with your current suppliers?” and “What problems have you experienced with your current methods of advertising?” are examples of problem questions.
- **Implication questions**—ask the buyer to consider the ramifications of the problems uncovered by the problem questions. These questions help motivate the buyer to want to solve the problems. “How is your business affected when your suppliers are late with deliveries?” and “What is the effect of ineffective advertising on your profitability?” are examples of implication questions.
- **Need-payoff questions**—focus the buyer’s attention on the benefits of solving the problem. As with implication questions, these questions help motivate the buyer to want to solve the problem. “How would your business be affected if your suppliers were never late with deliveries?” and “What impact would effective advertising have on your bottom line area?” are examples of need-payoff questions.

## Situation Questions (probing quesitons)

Situation

Problem

Implication

Need-payoff

### Definition:

Finding out data and facts about the buyer's existing situation.

### Examples:

How many people do you employ at this location? Can you please describe your payroll process?

### Impact:

Least powerful of the SPIN questions. Negative relationship to success. Most people ask too many.

### Advice:

Eliminate unnecessary Situation Questions by doing your homework in advance.

# Problem Questions

## Evaluative questions

Situation

Problem

Implication

Need-payoff

### Definition:

Probe further for specific difficulties that the buyer is experiencing with the existing situation.

### Examples:

What sorts of challenges do you face with your payroll process?  
Have ever had trouble getting the payroll processed on-time?

### Impact:

More powerful than Situation Questions. People ask more Problem Questions as they become more experienced at selling.

### Advice:

Think of your products or services in terms of the problems they solve for buyers—not in terms of the details or characteristics that your products possess.

# Implication Questions

Situation

Problem

Implication

Need-payoff

## Definition:

Assist the buyer into thinking about the potential consequences of the problems and understand the urgency of resolving the problem to seek a solution.

## Examples:

How do your employees feel when the payroll process is delayed? Do you have additional expenses as a result of having trouble with the payroll process? How much?

## Impact:

The most powerful of all SPIN questions. Top salespeople ask lots of Implication Questions.

## Advice:

These questions are the hardest to ask. Prepare for these questions by identifying and understanding the implications of various suspected needs prior to the sales call.

# Need-Payoff Questions

Situation

Problem

Implication

Need-payoff

## Definition:

Based on the implication of the problem -- They seek the buyer's opinion as to what life would be like if the problem was solved.

## Examples:

How would your employees respond if you could assure them, they will always receive their paychecks on time? Would you like to learn more about how we can help you accomplish this?

## Impact:

Versatile questions used a great deal by top salespeople. These questions help the buyer to understand the benefits of solving the problem.

## Advice:

Use these questions to get buyers to *tell you* the benefits that your solution can offer. Use to propose a solution and develop commitment from buyer.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iE6xkPqBIYo>

Like SPIN,  
**ADAPT** is a  
progressive  
questioning  
technique  
designed to  
uncover needs  
that the  
salesperson can  
satisfy with his or  
her market offer

A question system that uses logic-based funnelling sequence of questions that identifies and assesses the buyer's situation  
Designed to uncover needs that the salesperson can satisfy with his or her market offer.

**Assessment**

**Discovery**

**Activation**

**Projection**

**Transition**

# ADAPT

- **Assessment questions**—are designed to elicit factual information about the customer's current situation. "With how many suppliers do you currently work?" and "Do you own or lease your cleaning equipment?" are examples of assessment questions.
- **Discovery questions**—arise from the information gained from the preceding assessment questions and seek to uncover problems or dissatisfactions (that the salesperson can positively address) the buyer is experiencing. "How well are your current suppliers performing?" and "Have you ever had any trouble getting your leased equipment serviced?" are examples of discovery questions.
- **Activation questions**—are designed to motivate the buyer to want to solve the problem or dissatisfaction discussed in the previous stage. These questions ask the buyer to consider the ramifications of the problem. "How do the problems you are currently experiencing with your suppliers affect your production efficiency?" and "Do you ever experience downtime while waiting for your leased equipment to be serviced?" are examples of activation questions.
- **Projection questions**—ask the buyer to describe what life would be like if the problem(s) or dissatisfaction(s) were eliminated. These questions are also designed to motivate the buyer to want to solve the problem. "If your suppliers were always on time and orders were always accurate, how would your production efficiency be enhanced?" and "If downtime were eliminated, how would your productivity be affected?" are examples of projection questions.
- **Transition questions**—are designed to help the salesperson make a smooth transition from needs discovery to the presentation of a solution. "Would you be interested in hearing about how you can eliminate the problems you are currently experiencing with your suppliers?" and "Are you interested in learning how you can lease your equipment and still eliminate downtime?" are examples of transition questions.

### Assessment Questions

- Broad-based and general facts describing situation
- Nonthreatening as no interpretation is requested
- Open-end questions for maximum information

### Discovery Questions

- Questions probing information gained in assessment
- Seeking to uncover problems or dissatisfaction that could lead to suggested buyer needs
- Open-end questions for maximum information

### Activation Questions

- Show the negative impact of a problem discovered in the discovery sequence
- Designed to activate buyer's interest in and desire to solve the problem

### Projection Questions

- Projects what life would be like without the problems
- Buyer establishes the value of funding and implementing a solution

### Transition Questions

- Confirms buyer's interest in solving problem
- Transitions to presentation of solution

What types of operating arrangements do you have with your suppliers?  
Who is involved in the purchase decision-making process?

How well are your current suppliers performing?  
Have you ever had any trouble getting your leased equipment serviced?

How do the problems you are currently experiencing with your suppliers affect your production efficiency?  
Do you ever experience downtime while waiting for your leased equipment to be serviced?

If your suppliers were always on time and orders were always accurate, how would your production efficiency be enhanced?  
If downtime were eliminated, how would your productivity be affected?

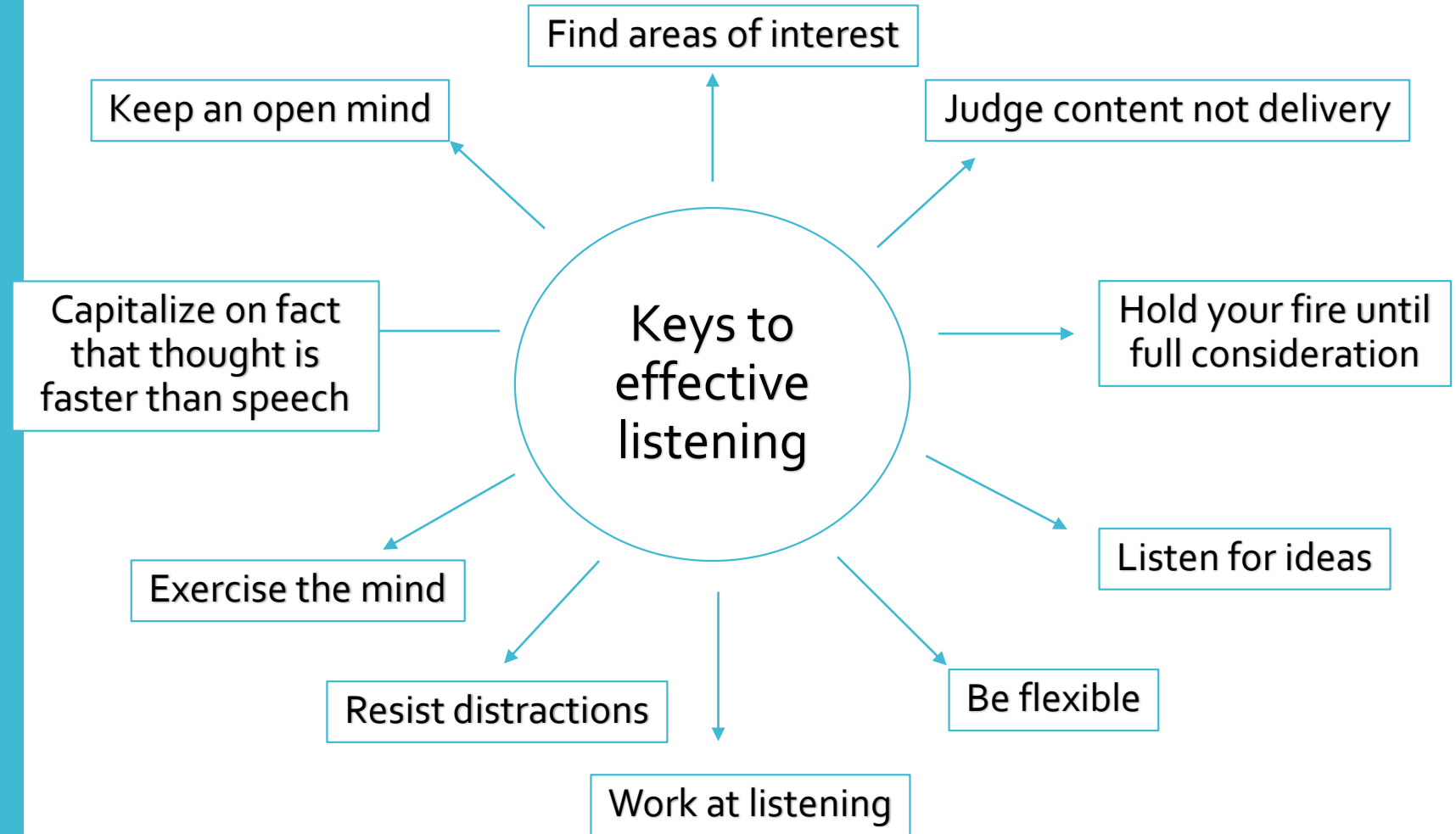
Would you be interested in hearing about how you can eliminate the problems you are currently experiencing with your suppliers?  
Are you interested in learning how you can lease your equipment and still eliminate downtime?

# VERBAL COMMUNICATION: LISTENING

- Effective selling requires:  
Questioning  
**Listening**  
Giving information  
Nonverbal communication  
Written communication
- Listening is the other half of effective questioning
- Asking the customer for information is little value if salesperson does not listen
- Effective listening rated among the most critical skills for successful selling
  - Identified as #1 weakness of salespeople
  - Identified as primary cause of failure



# Keys to Effective Listening



# Facets of Listening

## Paying attention

Pay attention – listen to understand, not to reply. Resist urge to interrupt and receive full message the buyer is communicating

## Monitoring non-verbals

Monitor non-verbals – make effective eye contact and check to see if the buyer's body language and speech patterns match what is being said

## Paraphrasing and repeating

Paraphrase and repeat – confirm your correct understanding of what the buyer is saying by paraphrasing and repeating what you have heard.

## Making no assumptions

Make no assumptions- ask questions to clarify the meaning of what the buyer is communicating

## Encouraging the buyer to talk

Encourage the buyer to talk – encourage the flow of information by giving positive feedback and help the buyer stay on track by asking purposeful questions

## Visualizing

Visualize – Maximize your attention and comprehension by thinking about visualizing what the buyer is saying.

# Effective Listening

## EXHIBIT 4.7

### Ten Keys to Effective Listening

The Key Practice	The Weak Listener	The Strong Listener
1. Find areas of interest	Tunes out dry subjects	Actively looks for opportunities of common interest
2. Judge content, not delivery	Tunes out if the delivery is poor	Skips over delivery errors and focuses on content
3. Hold your fire until full consideration	Evaluates and enters argument prior to completion of message	Does not judge or evaluate until message is complete
4. Listen for ideas	Listens for facts	Listens for central themes
5. Be flexible	Takes intensive and detailed notes	Takes fewer notes and limits theme to central theme and key ideas presented
6. Work at listening	Shows no energy output; attention is faked	Works hard at attending the message and exhibits active body state
7. Resist distractions	Is distracted easily	Resists distractions and knows how to concentrate
8. Exercise your mind	Resists difficult expository material in favor of light recreational materials	Uses complex and heavy material as exercise for the mind
9. Keep an open mind	Reacts to emotional words	Interprets color words but does not get hung up on them
10. Capitalize on the fact that thought is faster than speech	Tends to daydream with slow speakers	Challenges, anticipates, mentally summarizes, weighs evidence, and listens between the lines

Effective listening requires more than just hearing what is being said:

## Types of Listening



### **Social Listening**

Informal mode of listening that can be associated with day-to-day conversation and entertainment



### **Serious Listening**

A form of listening that is associated with events or topics in which it is important to sort through, interpret, understand and respond to received messages

# In the Selling Context

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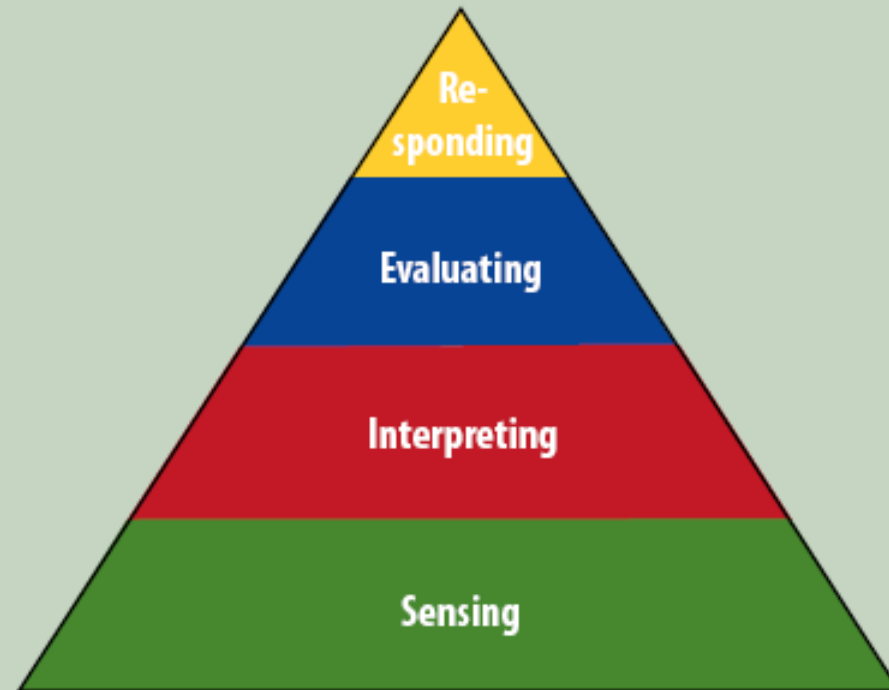
## Active Listening

### **Active Listening:**

*The cognitive process of actively sensing, interpreting, evaluating, and responding to the verbal and nonverbal messages.*

FIGURE 4.3

### SIER Hierarchy of Active Listening



**Active listening** is the concentrating on identifying the message the buyer is trying to convey through both verbal and nonverbal communication.

## IN THE SALES CONTEXT



**Sensing** is the process of receiving the verbal and nonverbal messages sent by the buyer. It requires the salesperson to both hear what the buyer is saying and see how the buyer is putting the message across (i.e. body language).



**Interpreting** is the process of drawing meaning from the message (both verbal and nonverbal). Salespeople must make sure they consider the buyer's experiences, knowledge, and attitudes when deriving meaning from the message.



**Evaluating** is the process of determining the extent to which the salesperson agrees with what the buyer is communicating. Salespeople should wait until the buyer has finished communicating his or her message and until they are sure they understand the message before evaluating it.



**Responding** is the process of providing the buyer with feedback, verbal and/or nonverbal, related to the message. The salesperson should use responses to communicate understanding, encourage elaboration, and control the flow of the conversation.

# Understanding the Superiority of Word Pictures

Effective selling  
requires:  
Questioning  
**Listening**  
**Giving information**  
Nonverbal  
communication  
Written  
communication

*Studies in psychology have found that pictures tend to be more memorable than their verbal counterparts. Pictures enhance understanding and are more easily recalled than abstract words and symbols.*

- The verbal message creates a mental picture in the receiver's mind.  
"Tropicana juices are bursting with flavor."
- Use words and phrases that convey concrete and detailed meaning  
"This new system will increase weekly production by 2,100 units."
- Integrate relevant visual aids into verbal communication.  
"As you can see by this chart . . . ."



# Impact of Poor Grammar

- Meaning and credibility of the message are downgraded
- Receiver begins to focus on the sender rather than the message
- Receiver dismisses the sender and the sender's organization from performing the role of an effective supplier and partner

On Jun 21, 2018, at 1:43 PM, Patricia Martinez <[patty@hlgross.com](mailto:patty@hlgross.com)> wrote:  
Hello Marylyn:

we don't make em in round. only square. i am sorry,, i got wrong information before. style # PE103, they gonna cost you 200. i can order em for u.

Thanks

Patty Martinez  
Gemologist  
H.L. Gross & Bro. Jewelers

# Impact of Logical Sequencing

Logical sequencing of material provides clarity and assists the receiver in following the facts

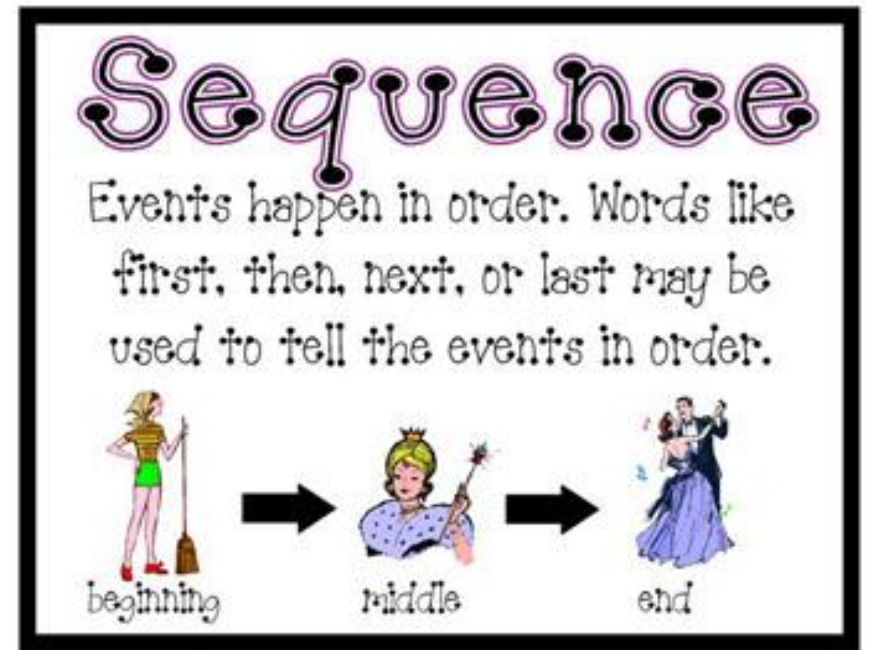
Facts and details must be organized

If not followed:

- Presentation will be inefficient and ineffective

- Receiver will have to ask many questions to gain clarity

- Receiver may dismiss the sender as incompetent



Effective selling requires:

Questioning

Listening

Giving information

**Nonverbal communication**

Written communication

# Nonverbal Communication

*50% or more of the meaning conveyed in interpersonal communication comes through nonverbal behaviors.*

- The conscious and unconscious reactions, movements and utterances that people use in addition to the words and symbols associated with language.

- Facial Expressions
- Eye Movements
- Placement and Movements of Hands, Arms, Head, and Legs
- Body Posture and Orientation
- Proxemics (prox-EE-Mics)– Personal space
- Variation in Voice Characteristics
  - Speaking Rate and Pause Duration
  - Pitch or Frequency
  - Intensity and Loudness



# Facial Expressions

Central point of focus

Frowning, pursed lips and squinted eyes = uncertainty, disagreement & skepticism

Tightness of jawline = suspicion and anger

Smiles = agreement & interest

Biting lip = uncertainty



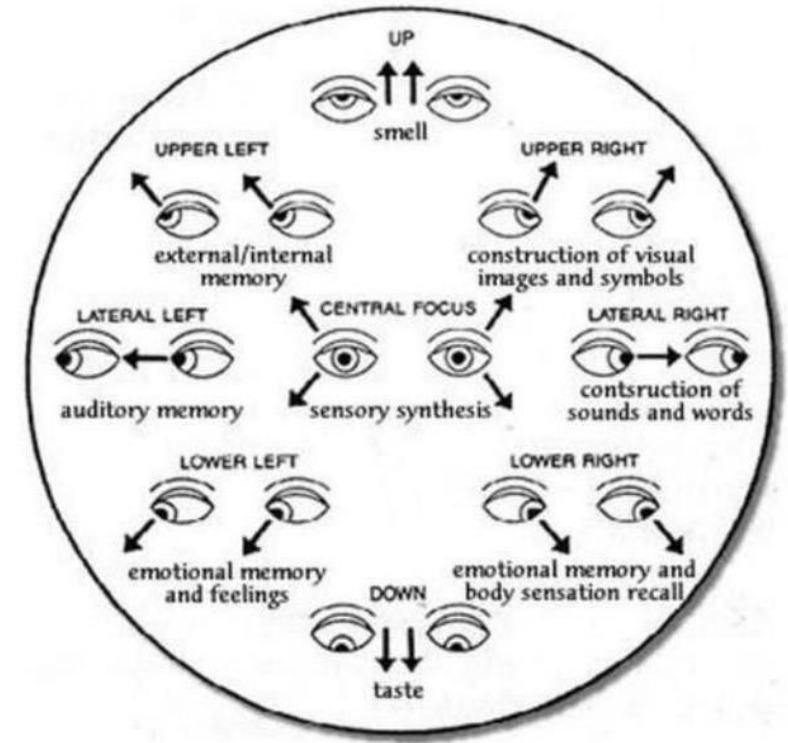
# Eye Movement

Increased eye contact = increasing levels of interest and concentration

Stare = threat or power

Blank stare or eye contact away from conversation = disinterest and boredom

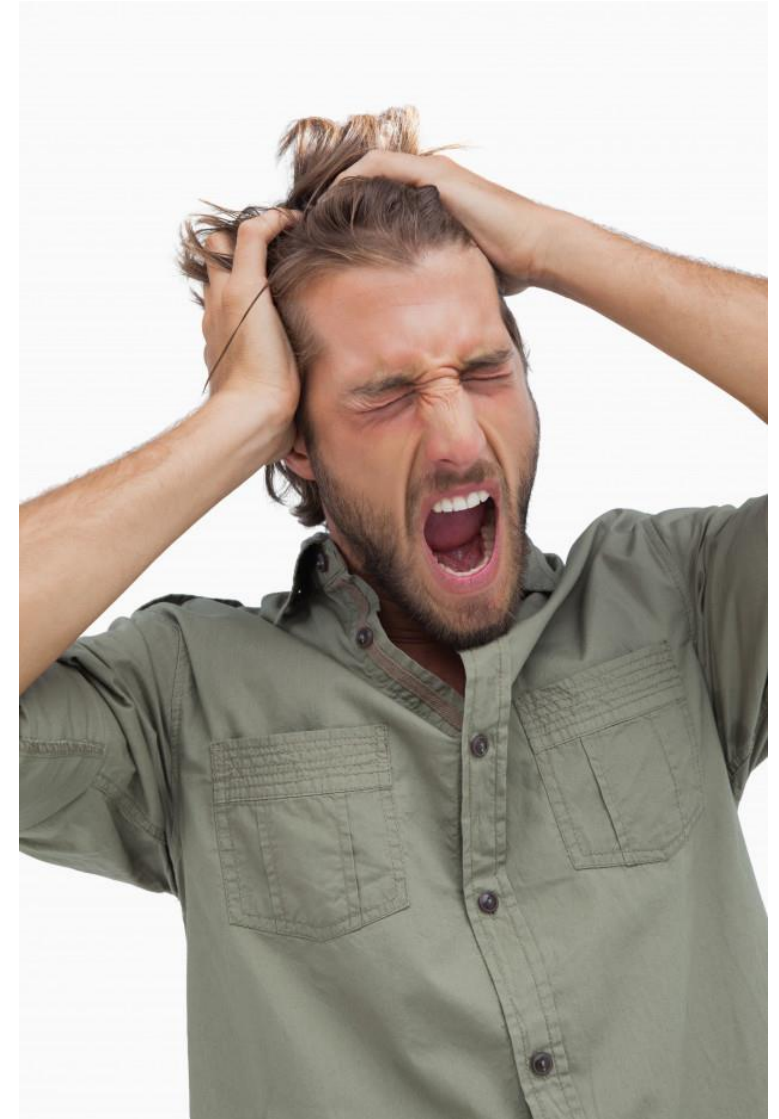
Repeated glances to watch (iPhone) = conversation is over



This is how your eyes move when you're thinking about something. It's actually a good way to tell if someone is lying or not, because they'll look to their left (your right, durr) when they're constructing false memories, and to their right when they're actually remembering them.

# Placement & Movements of Hands, Arms, Head and Legs

- Smooth and gradual movements = calm and confident
- Jerky and hurried movements = nervousness & stress
- Uncrossed arms and legs = openness & cooperation
- Increase movement of head and limbs = tension
- Tight clasp of hands/fists = stress and tension
- Hands on chin & tilted head = increased levels of evaluation
- Drumming fingers or tapping = impatience
- Fingers through hair & rubbing back of neck = nervousness and apprehension



# Body Posture and Orientation

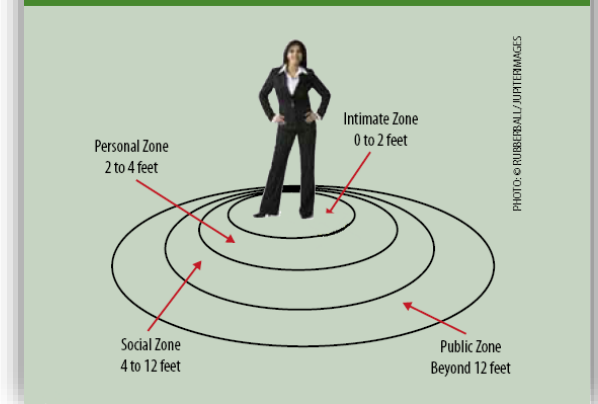
- Fidgeting and shifting from side to side = nervous and apprehensive
- Leaning forward or sitting on edge of chair = increasing interest and positive disposition
- Leaning away = disinterest, boredom, distrust
- Rigid erect posture = inflexibility, disinterest
- Sitting back in chair , edge of chair = power



# Proximics

- Proxemics refers to the personal distance that individuals prefer to keep between themselves and other individuals and is an important element of nonverbal communication.
- The physical distance between the salesperson and the buyer is a form of nonverbal communication and affects the comfort level of the buyer.
- A salesperson is standing too close may be uncomfortable and feel that the salesperson is pushy or aggressive.
- The salesperson is standing too far away may perceive the salesperson as uninterested and not customer-oriented.
- Salespeople should understand the concept of proxemics so that they can effectively communicate with their customers.

**FIGURE 4.4**  
Personal Space and Interpersonal Communication



# Nonverbal Clusters

- Nonverbal communication is often broken down into several individual components.
- Nonverbal clusters are groups of related expressions, gestures, and movements.
- A single isolated gesture or movement cannot be taken as a reliable indication of the true intent or meaning of a message.
  - Rather, sensing and interpreting groups or clusters of nonverbal cues provides a more reliable indicator of the message and intent.
  - It is important for salespeople to be able to identify and read nonverbal clusters so that they are better able to capture what the buyer is conveying through the set of nonverbal expressions, gestures or movements (i.e. nonverbal clusters).

# Common Nonverbal Clusters

## EXHIBIT 4.8

### Common Nonverbal Clusters

Cluster Name	Cluster Meaning	Body Posture and Orientation	Movement of Hands, Arms, and Legs	Eyes and Facial Expressions
<b>Openness</b>	Openness, flexibility, and sincerity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moving closer</li> <li>• Leaning forward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open hands</li> <li>• Removing coat</li> <li>• Unbutton collar</li> <li>• Uncrossed arms and legs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slight smile</li> <li>• Good eye contact</li> </ul>
<b>Defensiveness</b>	Defensiveness, skepticism, and apprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rigid body</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crossed arms and legs</li> <li>• Clenched fists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal eye contact</li> <li>• Glancing sideways</li> <li>• Pursed lips</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation</b>	Evaluation and consideration of message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaning forward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand on cheek</li> <li>• Stroking chin</li> <li>• Chin in palm of hand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tilted head</li> <li>• Dropping glasses to tip of nose</li> </ul>
<b>Deception</b>	Dishonesty and secretiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patterns of rocking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fidgeting with objects</li> <li>• Increased leg movements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased eye movement</li> <li>• Frequent gazes elsewhere</li> <li>• Forced smile</li> </ul>
<b>Readiness</b>	Dedication or commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sitting forward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hands on hips</li> <li>• Legs uncrossed</li> <li>• Feet flat on floor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased eye contact</li> </ul>
<b>Boredom</b>	Lack of interest and impatience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head in palm of hands</li> <li>• Slouching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drumming fingers</li> <li>• Swinging a foot</li> <li>• Brushing and picking at items</li> <li>• Tapping feet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor eye contact</li> <li>• Glancing at watch</li> <li>• Blank stares</li> </ul>

END