## Handout: Non-Verbal Communication

There are two basic categories of non-verbal communication.

* Static Features are those that deal with the following aspects of non-verbal communication.
  + Distance—the amount of space between people could indicate attraction, conflict or avoidance.
  + Orientation—how people place themselves (ex. face-to-face, side-by-side, etc.) indicates their attitude towards the other person. For example, a side-by-side orientation could indicate a collaborative attitude.
  + Posture—how a person carries himself or herself is another indicator of their attitude. A closed posture (ex. arms crossed) could indicate a formal attitude.
  + Physical contact—behaviors like shaking hands demonstrates a willingness to engage the person. Avoiding any contact could be interpreted as apprehension. As a manager, you should always keep physical contact at a minimum or only when necessary. Others can misinterpret physical contact.
* Dynamic Features are those that are observed as the person is talking or interacting with another person. Here are some of the basic non-verbal communications in this area.
  + Facial expressions (ex. smiles, frowns, yawning, etc)
  + Gestures—clenched fists indicates tension
  + Looking—poor eye contact could be seen as avoidance