

Physical delivery (UW-La Crosse Public Speaking Center)

Physical delivery refers to *nonverbal delivery*, or all of our physical behaviors that can improve our speech.

Types of physical delivery

- **Physical appearance:** What a speaker is wearing (clothing) as well as grooming and hygiene
 - Physical appearance should be appropriate for the situation
 - When in doubt, ask what the expectations are for the speaking situation
- **Posture:** Body position when speaking
 - Speakers should pay attention to their posture
 - Appearing to be too comfortable or relaxed in a speaking situation could demonstrate lack of interest or engagement
- **Facial expression:** Complements the verbal message
 - Shows emotion and engagement with the topic
 - Helps connect the audience to the message of the speaker
- **Gestures:** Movement of hands and arms that help emphasize and explain speech material
 - Practice with gestures
 - Use gestures that complement your message
- **Eye contact:** Helps maintain audience attention and connection
 - In dominant cultures in the United States, eye contact is very important to the communication process
 - Eye contact helps a speaker know how they are doing in a speech based on observing their audience
- **Movement:** How much a speaker moves around the speaking space
 - Purposeful movement can help create immediacy with the audience

Tips for effective physical delivery

- Incorporate physical delivery into speech practice
- Use physical delivery to create connections with audience, but be aware of personal space
- Consider the physical space where speech will be delivered when incorporating physical delivery into your speech
- If possible, practice in the physical space or one similar to it before you deliver your speech

Handout adapted from: Husiman, D., Berry, I., Peterson, J., Van Oss, J. (Eds.) (2019). *Communicating Effectively*. Southlake, TX. Fountainhead Press.