



# Building the Foundation

**Chapter 1:** What Is Nonverbal Communication?

**Chapter 2:** What Is Social Engineering?

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# 1

## What Is Nonverbal Communication?

*Emotion always has its roots in the unconscious and manifests itself in the body.*

*—Irene Claremont de Castillejo*



**M**y first book, *Social Engineering: The Art of Human Hacking*, touched on the subject of communication modeling. I talked about how important it is to develop and understand the model around which you and others communicate.

Communication modeling is understanding the methods used to give and receive information. For instance, if you are communicating through email the *sender* (you) has to transmit emotion, intention, and message using only words, emoticons, and phrasing. The *receiver* (recipient) has to decipher this based on their state of mind and the way they interpret your email. In the communications cycle, feedback, in its varied forms, is critical.

If you are communicating in person, on the other hand, the sender has not only the words spoken but the body language, facial expressions, and more to relay the message. This means that a social engineer needs to model their communication style, method, and content based on the manner of communication as well as the receiver.

This chapter focuses on nonverbal communication. Nonverbal communication is a rich and complex topic, so this chapter first identifies what nonverbal communication is before breaking it down into smaller subsets.

To understand nonverbal communication, you must also understand what each one of our senses adds to the way we communicate. That is the crux of this chapter. I will touch on these topics and give an overview of what comprises the whole of nonverbal communications.

For instance, suppose you are giving a speech in front of a large group. As you look into the crowd, you see some people yawning, some using their mobile devices, and some leaning on their hands with their eyelids drooping. What do these actions mean? Without any words, you probably can conclude that you are losing your audience and that they are bored and uninterested.

Why? One simple reason: nonverbal communication. Many studies attach a percentage to how much of what we communicate is nonverbal. Some say that more than 50 percent of communication is nonverbal. In my work with Dr. Ekman, I have learned that it is hard to attach a real percentage to this phenomenon because it changes according to the type of communication, its purpose, toward whom it is directed, and many

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other factors. However, everyone agrees that the percentage would be high if a percentage could be attached to it.

Think back to the last time you received a text message or email that you interpreted as being harsh or sarcastic, but later you found out that was not the sender's (transmitter's) intent. Why does this happen? When you are reading a message without the transmitter present, you interject your feelings and present emotional state into the message.

I remember one hectic day when my brain was going in 50 directions and I was stressed out. Someone sent me a message that said something like "I tried calling you a few times. If you decide to actually work today, give me a call." I was seeing red. How dare he accuse me of being lazy! Doesn't he know how much I've done today? I've probably accomplished more today than he has in the last three weeks! I'll give him a piece of my mind!

I wrote a long email, chewing him out. But as I reread it, I began to hear in my head how angry I sounded. I thought about who had sent the email and how we always joked around. I was stressed and under pressure and had put my emotional state on the sender of the email. Emails lack voice tone, facial expressions, and body language to help us get the message the sender is trying to send.

If I had been sitting in front of that person, I would have seen his smile and jovial nature. These would have quickly quelled any misimpression that he had negative thoughts about my work ethic or time-management skills.

Nonverbals are such an important part of how we communicate that some people have devoted their life's work to understanding them. This book delves into the research from these people, such as Dr. Ekman, analyzing the research to understand how it applies to social engineers.

Dr. Joseph J. Campos, head of the University of California Berkeley's Institute of Human Development, along with Drs. Anderson, Witherington, Uchiyama, and Barbu-Roth, performed a "visual cliff" experiment to demonstrate the importance of nonverbal communication.<sup>1</sup> An infant who was

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<sup>1</sup> Lejeune, L., Anderson, D. I., Campos, J. J., Witherington, D. C., Uchiyama, I., Barbu-Roth, M. (2005). "Avoidance of Heights on the Visual Cliff in Newly Walking Infants." *Infancy* 7(3), 285–298.

old enough to crawl but not old enough to speak was placed at the end of a table with a Plexiglas top and a checkerboard pattern underneath. It looked to the baby as though, halfway across, the tabletop dropped off steeply, like a tall step down, but this was an optical illusion.

At the far end, past the “dangerous cliff,” was a toy. Over the edge of the table, near the toy, the baby could see the face of his or her mother. The mother was instructed to use no words, only facial expressions, to encourage her baby to come to her. When the baby arrived at the “cliff,” the mother was to show a macroexpression—a very long facial expression—of either happiness or fear. If the mother was happy, she displayed a smile that produced wrinkles on the outer sides of each eye (what Dr. Ekman describes as a “sincere smile”) and told the baby everything was okay, as shown in Figure 1-1. If the mother showed fear, she would pull back her lips horizontally/laterally and open her eyes wide, as shown in Figure 1-2.

When the mother showed signs of happiness, the baby was more likely not to notice the visual cliff and to crawl straight across to his or her mother. If the mother showed signs of fear, the baby displayed caution. One baby even shook his head when thinking about crossing the cliff.



**Figure 1-1:** How would the baby feel at seeing this expression on his mother?



**Figure 1-2:** How would the baby feel at seeing this expression on his mother?

This and similar experiments prove how important it is to understand the depth, seriousness, and impact that nonverbal communication has on the people we communicate with. Taking this a step further, we see how important it is to understand how professional social engineers can use nonverbals. Using this experiment as an example, if a social engineer's face shows fear when approaching a target, it will create feelings of fear in the target and cause them to wonder what is going on. If, on the other hand, the social engineer shows happiness, it is easier to develop rapport and achieve the desired goal.

So far I have classified all nonverbal communication into one large group, but this type of communication has many aspects.

## The Different Aspects of Nonverbal Communication

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Nonverbal communication can be broken into different aspects. Numerous researchers have spent thousands of hours dividing it into



many categories. This section discusses some of the aspects I feel can really help you understand nonverbal communication.

In particular, this section discusses seven aspects of nonverbal communication: kinesics, proxemics, touch, eye contact, olfactics, adornment, and facial expressions. The following sections briefly describe each.

## Kinesics

Kinesics is defined as “a systematic study of the relationship between nonlinguistic body motions (as blushes, shrugs, or eye movement) and communication.”

In essence, this term describes body language and how our bodies can give away the emotion we are feeling. Dr. Ekman wrote a paper in 1975 called “Communicative Body Movements” that focused on the work of Dr. David Efron from the 1940s. It discussed four areas of kinesics: emblems, illustrators, manipulators, and one I call RSVP. I will briefly describe these here and then explain in much more detail in Chapter 3.

### *Emblems*

An emblem is a nonverbal movement that often involves the hands. Emblems have some very distinct aspects.

Imagine this scenario: From across the room, your friend notices you look a little pale, and she mouths, “Are you okay?” What gesture or gestures does she use—a thumbs-up with a shrug? How do you respond? Maybe you rub your stomach and give a thumbs-down motion. What are you saying? Your stomach is upset. You just had a small conversation with few or no words, using emblems.

Also, ponder the second aspect. If your conversation had taken place in the Middle East, you might not have used a thumbs-up emblem, because it has a completely different meaning in that part of the world. The emblems shown in Figures 1-3 and 1-4 change meaning depending on where they are used.

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**Figure 1-3:** “Everything is okay,” or a derogatory statement?



**Figure 1-4:** Depending on where in the world you make this gesture, it could be benign or offensive.

Very much like the words you use, which you are aware of, we are aware of the emblems we use when we are speaking, because they are deliberate. And just as “slips of the tongue” can occur, emblem slips can happen in conversation.

Think about some of the emblems you have seen and what they mean.

In the US, the emblem shown in Figure 1-3 communicates that everything is good, but in the Middle East, parts of Africa, and other lands, it's an offensive gesture.

I will dive deeper into this topic in Chapter 3 because as a social engineer, you should understand emblems and their meanings depending on the country, culture, or people you are trying to influence. Using the wrong emblem at the wrong time can quickly change your communication from something influential to something insulting.

### *Illustrators*

In 1972, Dr. Ekman wrote a paper called “Hand Movements.”<sup>2</sup> It defined illustrators as “those acts which are intimately related on a moment-to-moment basis with speech, with phrasing, content, voice contours, loudness, etc.” (p. 358)

In other words, illustrators are gestures that usually augment what is being said. They are somewhat similar to emblems, although illustrators usually are used peripherally and without awareness.

When someone says “Aha!” or yells “Wait!,” what illustrator do you imagine being used? Or when someone says, “I headed north of the mountain and then drove on a really winding road for about three hours,” what illustrators do you imagine being used? You probably can picture how those conversations would go. You have seen and used illustrators many times.

### *Manipulators*

A manipulator is any movement that involves a manipulation or grooming of a body part or article of clothing due to nervousness or discomfort

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<sup>2</sup> Ekman, P. (1972, December). “Hand Movements.” *Journal of Communication* 22(4), pp. 353–374.

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or as a link to relaxation and comfort. Examples include playing with your ring or cuffs, rubbing your hands together, adjusting your buttons or shirt, and fixing your hair.

Dr. Ekman's work made one thing very clear, and I reiterate this point often: These and other cues are not automatic signs of deception. They may indicate that the person is uncomfortable with the situation, the other person, the questions, or the environment, and they may be linked to deception. But this doesn't mean that if someone starts using manipulators he or she is a liar.

In a social engineering context, manipulators help you see if someone is comfortable or showing signs of discomfort. In addition, knowing how the human mind perceives these signals allows a social engineer to use them to cause a feeling in his or her targets.

### *RSVP*

Our verbal style and content comprise another emblem that is important to focus on. RSVP stands for rhythm, speed, volume, and pitch. This refers not to the actual words that are used but to everything else surrounding those words.

The rhythm a person uses when speaking can tell us if he is nervous, calm, confident, or feeling other emotions.

The speed at which he speaks can indicate his feelings, where he is from, and how much confidence he has in what he is saying.

Volume can give clues about the content of what is being said. Is he whispering or speaking too loudly? These things can indicate what type of person we are dealing with. A rise in volume may indicate anger.

Pitch is likewise important, because it can indicate comfort and/or discomfort. A rise in pitch may indicate fear; a drop in pitch may indicate sadness or uncertainty.

Noticing things such as pauses, repetition, and changes in words or tones can help us understand what the person is really trying to say.

Here are some things to watch for:

- **Change of pronouns (verbal style):** If the person starts out saying "I" but then changes to "we" and "us," this may indicate a level

of deception. Even if changing pronouns is not deceptive, it is a good indicator for us to listen more closely for why the story has changed.

- **Increase in stuttering or word repetition (verbal style):** This may indicate increased anxiety or stress. One word of caution: Without a baseline, you can't know if the person stutters as a part of his or her normal speech patterns, so use this indicator with caution.
- **Change in voice tone:** Tone can indicate much emotion. Happiness, disgust, anger, and contempt all can come across in your tone. As a test, the next time you see your dog, look at him sternly, angrily shout, "I love you!," and watch as he runs to a corner. The words are not important, but the tone and expressions are.
- **Verbal hedges:** When someone doesn't want to answer a question, he or she will "hedge," trying to avoid the question.
- **The Pause:** A pause indicates cognitive load and may also include eye movement. In simplest terms, the paused speaker is formulating a response. For the interviewer, the issue is whether the pause is recall memory or to fabricate a story. Here's an important axiom: *Do not interrupt the pause.* Too often, the interviewer fills the pause, perhaps taking the speaker off the hook, or inserts leading questions or comments that may influence the speaker.

Learning to observe these signs in others and being aware of how they spill over into your own speech can help you as a communicator and a social engineer. You can figure out how to determine levels of comfort and discomfort as well as nonverbal cues to a person's true emotional state.

The next aspect of nonverbal communication takes a trip back in time to some research conducted in the 1950s.

## Proxemics

In the 1950s researcher Dr. Edward Hall coined the term *proxemics*, which concerns our use of the space around us and various differences that can indicate comfort or discomfort.

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The phrase “personal space” applies to proxemics. In his research, Dr. Hall talked about four areas:

- **Public space:** Focusing on Western cultures, he found that a range of 12 to 25 feet is the acceptable separation from, for example, an audience and a speaker. Think about the last time you attended a concert or saw the president speak on TV. You probably noticed a level of public space that was considered acceptable.
- **Social space:** This is the space that is considered acceptable in social settings. Try to remember the last time you were at the beach, sitting on a beach towel with your family. How close would be acceptable for someone to come set up next to you? Dr. Hall says somewhere between 4 and 10 feet.
- **Personal space:** This is what we consider reasonable when interacting with family or friends. It is also acceptable space when waiting in line. This ranges from 2 to 4 feet.
- **Intimate space:** This space is reserved for those we let touch us, whisper to us, and be intimate with us. This is less than 1 foot.

Imagine you are in line at the ATM, and the person behind you comes within a few inches of you. When you move, he moves. You can feel his breath on the back of your neck. Creeped out? This stranger has violated your intimate space.

Yet in the Middle East, what they consider to be social space is what American citizens consider to be intimate space. If you conducted business there, as an American, you might find yourself constantly backing up if you were unaware of the customs. Some European cultures, on the other hand, have personal space requirements that are closer to our social space. It is important to understand and remember these differences when interacting with other cultures. Again, they can help you notice signs of discomfort or comfort.

### Touch

Touch is an integral part of the human experience. We learn so much from it. Imagine how much trouble we would be in if we couldn't feel

heat, cold, sharpness, and so on. Our sense of touch goes a long way in communicating to our brains what's going on around us.

In the same way, touch can communicate emotions to others and create a sense of trust in them. Research conducted at the Université de Bretagne-Sud in Vannes, France showed that simply touching a complete stranger on the arm increased the likelihood of one stranger helping another from 63 percent to 90 percent.<sup>3</sup>

Of course, other factors come into play, such as cultural differences, age, gender, and background. Despite all that, the study helps social engineers understand how the power of nonsexual touch can create an atmosphere of compliance. When used properly, this aspect of nonverbal communication can open doors for the social engineer.

Dr. Paul Zak, a professor of macroeconomics and neuroscience at Claremont University, researched oxytocin, a naturally occurring chemical in the brain that helps people feel trust. He found that one of the key ways to release oxytocin is through a simple hug. A simple touch between two people, if done right, can release a chemical that creates an environment amenable to trust and rapport building—two key elements for any social engineer. He writes about this in his book called *The Moral Molecule*, and also discussed this topic on my podcast.

## Eye Contact

You may have heard that “The eyes are the windows to the soul.” This statement is true when we discuss how this area of nonverbal communication affects how we view the emotional state of other people.

Consider Figure 1-5. Which set of eyes shows someone who is happy, and which shows someone who is afraid? Both pictures are of the same woman, yet the difference is clear.

In this case, you don't need words—you don't even need the rest of the face; all you need are the eyes. This illustrates how important the eyes are to communication.

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<sup>3</sup> “Tactile Contact and Spontaneous Help: An Evaluation in a Natural Setting” by Nicholas Geuguen and Jacques Fischer-Lokou. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 2003, 143(6), 785–787.



**Figure 1-5:** Which expression is happy, and which is full of fear?

Some people believe you can tell if someone is lying based on the direction in which he looks, but recent studies have disproven that theory. Nevertheless, you can spot many things in regards to the eyes and levels of comfort or discomfort.

The topic of eye contact interests me. I tend to learn more easily when someone tells me a fact. Therefore, I tend to look away when someone is talking. Though I may appear not to be paying attention, I am actively listening. However, the person I am speaking to may not feel that way. Even though I am not being deceptive or rude, it is culturally accepted that when you're being spoken to, a certain amount of eye contact is proper.

Being conscious of eye contact can benefit the social engineer. At the same time, to not fall into the trap of thinking that everyone who looks away is lying. Do notice someone who shifts his or her eyes a lot or who cannot look at you when speaking. Noticing areas of discomfort can go a long way toward reading the person's emotional state.

In one of my conversations with Dr. Ekman, when I asked about the importance of eye contact, he said, "It can have many different meanings, depending on the context. It can assert dominance, initiate a flirtation, or be a sign that someone is lying, who mistakenly believes that only liars look away when they talk."

### Olfactics

Olfactics is the study of smell in relation to nonverbal communication. Our bodies associate certain smells with emotions and feelings. Some



smells can be powerful triggers for memories of and emotions toward people, events, or things.

Think of a food you love to smell when it's cooking. When you smell it, what happens? Conversely, what happens when you smell something that once made you sick, even to the point of vomiting? Even thinking about it now may cause your face to wrinkle in disgust.

Smell is a powerful force. Pheromones can attract the opposite sex and even induce other emotions, such as fear.

How does this apply to the social engineer? It is important to be aware of how we smell. Strong perfumes or colognes can be offensive to some people. Body odor also can be offensive, so social engineers should never subject their targets to body odors (unless your pretext is one that might allow for that).

## Adornment

See if you can answer these questions:

A woman in brown slacks, a brown shirt, and a brown ball cap drives up to your business and delivers some boxes. Who does she work for?

A young male pulls up to your house in jeans and a red-and-blue shirt, carrying a square box. Who does he work for?

A man is wearing a shirt with his name on it, his hands are covered in oil and grease, and he is wearing a ball cap. What does he do?

You probably can figure out that these describe a UPS delivery person, a pizza delivery guy, and a mechanic. Why? Adornment, or their clothing. Clothing, jewelry, make up, and even hair can set us apart and tells people all about us without words.

In one engagement I had to “break into” a few warehouses. I needed to do this not by scaling fences or picking locks, but by getting the employees to let me in willingly. I had a shirt made up with my “name” on it and a matching hat, and I went to the warehouse. I said I was from their waste management company and I needed to check their trash

compactor. No one asked me for ID, and no one called the local office. Why? My outfit told the story. And because the story matched what I said, no one stopped me.

One time I interviewed radio host Tom Mischke about how he got his job. He started his career as a prank caller to a local radio station, pretending to be certain characters. Eventually these characters became pretty well known in his area, so he began to have set times to call in and perform these characters for the listeners. He told me he spent time as each character, even going as far as dressing how he thought the character would dress. This story helps us understand how powerful adornment or clothing is to the social engineer. This point was highlighted by a group of researchers who set up some experiments involving “enclothed cognition.”<sup>4</sup>

They showed volunteers two white coats—one commonly worn by a doctor, and another by a painter. The first test was to find out how this group viewed the two different coats. Most participants felt that the doctor’s coat showed focus, attentiveness, caution, and responsibility, whereas the painter’s coat did not suggest these traits.

They ran a few experiments. First they tested to see if having the participants wear a lab coat made a difference. Then they also changed what it stood for. The interesting part of the study is that both coats were the same, but the researchers just told the subjects they had different roles.

It appears their hypothesis was correct. Again quoting this study and the term they coined, enclothed cognition:

*The current research provides initial support for our enclothed cognition perspective that clothes can have profound and systematic psychological and behavioral consequences for their wearers. In Experiment 1, participants who wore a lab coat displayed increased selective attention compared to participants who wore their regular clothes. In Experiments 2 and 3, we found robust evidence that this influence of clothing depends*

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<sup>4</sup> Adam, H. & Galinsky, A. D. (2012). “Enclothed cognition.” *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. doi: 10.1016/j.jesp.2012.02.008.

*on both whether the clothes are worn and the symbolic meaning of the clothes. When the coat was associated with a doctor but not worn, there was no increase in sustained attention. When the coat was worn but not associated with a doctor, there was no increase in sustained attention. Only when a) participants were wearing the coat and b) it was associated with a doctor did sustained attention increase. These results suggest a basic principle of enclothed cognition: It involves the co-occurrence of two independent factors—the symbolic meaning of the clothes and the physical experience of wearing them (Adam & Galinsky).*

These conclusions point to the power of clothes and adornment for the social engineer in two ways. First, the clothes the social engineer chooses to wear, and second, determining a target's thoughts about themselves based on their clothing.

## Facial Expressions

Chapter 5 discusses this topic in much more depth. The human face holds a lot of information about what we are feeling; it can tell a whole story without words. As I discussed in *Social Engineering*, learning to read facial expressions can enhance your ability to communicate clearly. Based on Dr. Ekman's research, Chapter 5 of this book is all about decoding the face, what each expression looks like, and what it can mean to you.

Many people believe you should focus only on the face or only on the body or only on the hands. But if there is one thing I learned in my couple of years with Dr. Ekman, it is that reading people is a whole package. The face may display an emotion, but that might be inconsistent with what you see in the body and hands and hear in the words. Learning to read the person as a whole is a talent that can make or break the social engineer.

The following exercise, taken from Dr. Ekman's work and *Social Engineering*, will help solidify this point. For each picture shown in Figure 1-6, decide what emotion you think is displayed.



**Figure 1-6:** What emotion do you think each picture represents?

Being able to read these emotions and therefore understand what someone may be feeling (notice I said *what*, not *why*) can help you adjust your approach or opening statement to be more attractive to that person.

You probably don't want to antagonize the person at the bottom right. You might want to exercise some extra humility when dealing with the person second from left in the top row. If you see the expression at the top, third from the left, you might want to find out what is disgusting him. You get the point: Examining facial expressions can help you adjust and change your approaches.

Years of research have revealed that these expressions are universal. Across gender, culture, race, and demographics are base emotions that we all feel and express the same way. Of course, the reasons for those emotions change depending on those very same things.

## How to Use This Information

The rest of this book digs a little deeper into these areas. You will see how you, as a social engineer, communicator, and human being, can use each of these cues to better understand the people around you.

Personally, I have found it exhilarating and enlightening to learn these things. To be able to look across the room and see that someone may be feeling sad or angry gives me insight into my family, friends, and others. Stepping away from the role of social engineer for a moment, I find this information enlightening because it helps me be more understanding. Instead of thinking, “Why would she say something like that to me?” or “Why would he act that way? What did I do to deserve that?,” I took the “me” and “I” out of the equation and began to understand what the person may be feeling. Doing so helped me understand that it isn’t all about me, as my good friend Robin Dreeke would say. It’s about understanding them.

Let me give you a short example of why this is so powerful. I was standing in Heathrow airport waiting for my turn at the customs officer. There are 27 banks of stations and yet only three people working. Tensions in the line are mounting and then two officers go on break, leaving one customs officer. One of the TV monitors flashes a message stating that if you have a complaint to give it to one of the people working there as complaints can help them improve.

I overheard a few people complaining to a man who appeared to be a manager. I must admit, I was pretty heated myself. I had another flight and was running late. I had eyed up the manager and determined when I got closer I would “file my complaint.” He came strolling across the floor as now a few returned from break. What I saw changed my plans. His fists were tightly clenched, showing white knuckles. His jaw was tight and his lips pressed together. His arms were stiff and his walk was heavy. What do you think?

He wasn’t just angry—he was infuriated. I didn’t know why just yet, but I determined if I were to complain, he was not the right guy and this was not the right time. Being able to see this body language and facial expressions saved me from making a grave mistake in judgment.

As I got closer to the front in line I heard him say to his co-worker, “Just because he works for the American government he thinks he can come to *my* country and speak to *me* that way?!? He needs to remember while he’s here he’s only a visitor, and that is a privilege that can be removed!”

Sure enough, I now had the proof needed that his anger was blazing and my minor complaint would not have “improved the quality of their service” but probably only landed me in some trouble, delays, and more problems.

As this simple story defines, once we open our minds to understanding the other person, what makes her tick, why she reacts a certain way, and why she says or does certain things, we begin to really understand her. This makes me recall another situation I was in recently where I did something very thoughtless. I said something that hurt a close friend. When she came to talk to me about it, I felt I was being attacked, and I became defensive. I made the situation all about me and reacted with a very self-protective attitude. Notice just the few sentences above are littered with “me’s” and “I’s.” That is where I was focused, not on her feelings but mine.

Shortly afterward, I saw this person again. Seeing her face made me happy, although nervous. She looked very sad. Not angry, just sad. As I approached her, her hips and feet were facing away from me. We exchanged pleasantries. I didn’t understand everything at the time it happened, but shortly thereafter I reflected on the situation. The sadness on her face and her body language indicated she was uncomfortable and didn’t want to be in that situation.

Why am I telling you about this mistake I made? Understanding how to read people helped me in this situation to see that I did not anger my friend, but instead hurt her. She may have felt angry at first, but the emotion I had left her with was sadness. It took away my need to be self-protective and to see what I had done and how it affected her.

Being able to see, read, and react to true emotion is powerful. But any power needs to be wielded properly. Maybe the best way to express what I want to say here can be taken from Dr. Ekman’s book *Emotions Revealed*<sup>5</sup>. He states the following about reading others’ emotions: “Often the best course is to say nothing about what you have seen. Instead, be alert to the possibilities. ... How you respond depends on the nature of your relationship, its past history and intended future, and your

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<sup>5</sup> Ekman, Paul. (2003). *Emotions Revealed: Recognizing Faces and Feelings to Improve Communication and Emotional Life*. New York: Times Books.

knowledge of that person. You may not always be entitled to comment, even vaguely, on the emotion you have detected” (230).

Interesting words, aren't they?

## Summary

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Considering that a large portion of what we communicate is not spoken but rather conveyed through our face, body, hands, feet, and legs, we should spend considerable time trying to understand nonverbal communication. But why should we do so in a book on social engineering?

Scammers, con artists, and social engineers have long been using these skills. They can build rapport, see when their mark is drawn in, and see when they have him on the hook. In essence, they can read the nonverbal cues that their target gives off.

As a social engineering professional, I find that it is important to understand these things—not just so that I can use them to complete my pretext, but so that I can use them to read my target's emotional state and see how I'm doing.

Before we go into the details, we need to discuss what social engineering is and why you should be aware of its malicious uses.

