

IMPACT OF SERVICE EMPLOYEES' NONVERBAL CUES ON CUSTOMER EVALUATIONS OF SERVICE ENCOUNTERS

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ABSTRACT

Nonverbal components play a key role in shaping overall evaluation of interpersonal communication. Given that service encounters include significant amount of interpersonal communication, it is important to explore the impact of nonverbal cues in service encounters. This study results suggest that nonverbal cues such as smiling, eye contact, head nodding, and hand shaking are powerful in shaping customers evaluation of the service provider. Smiling and eye contact are effective in shaping customers' perceptions of friendliness, trustworthiness, and warmth. In service failure situations, display of smiling, eye contact, and head nodding, in comparison to no display of smiling, eye contact, and nodding, leads to improved customers' evaluations.

Keywords: *Nonverbal communication, services management, and customer evaluations*