SUPERVISORS’ COMMUNICATIVE BEHAVIORS AS PREDICTORS OF THEIR SUBORDINATES’ COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION, JOB SATISFACTION, AND WILLINGNESS TO COLLABORATE

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Paul E. Madlock
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SUPERVISOR’S COMMUNICATIVE BEHAVIORS AS PREDICTORS OF THEIR 
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AND WILLINGNESS TO COLLABORATE

Paul E. Madlock

Thesis

Approved:  
Advisor  
Dr. Carolyn Anderson

Accepted:  
School Director  
Dr. Dudley Turner

Faculty Reader  
Dr. Andrew Rancer

Interim Dean of the College  
Dr. James Lynn

Faculty Reader  
Dr. Heather Walter

Dean of the Graduate School  
Dr. George Newkome

Date
ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between supervisor and subordinate communication with respect to supervisors’ behaviors of nonverbal immediacy and communicator competence, and how these behaviors influence subordinates’ job and communication satisfaction, and their willingness to work collaboratively. Additionally, the study examined subordinates’ trait of willingness to collaborate for effects on job and communication satisfaction.

Participants (N = 275 [men, 132; women, 143]) worked for female supervisors (N = 129) or worked for male supervisors (N = 146). The findings indicated a significant and positive relationship between supervisors’ communicative behaviors and their subordinates’ perceived job and communication satisfaction, and their willingness to collaborate. Additionally, the data revealed that significant differences existed between supervisors’ levels of communicative behaviors (high vs. low) and subordinates’ reported job and communication satisfaction.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

People spend over half of their lives doing some type of work and most of the time they identify themselves with their occupations. Moreover, many take great pride in their work with the focus on more than a paycheck. Such pride may include a sense of accomplishment and personal satisfaction. The focus of this study was inspired by prior research that suggested communication between supervisor and subordinate influenced employee satisfaction (Jablin, 1979). However, the present study enhances communication research by examining certain communication variables that have received limited attention in prior organizational communication studies.

The purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between communicative behaviors displayed by supervisors, in relationship to their subordinates’ job and communication satisfaction, including subordinates’ willingness to collaborate. Research examining the effects supervisors have on their subordinates’ job satisfaction and communication satisfaction have received of a great deal of attention (Falcione, 1974; Falcione, McCroskey, & Daly, 1977; Goldhaber, Porter, Yates, & Lesniak, 1978; Richmond & McCroskey, 1979). Further, it has been predicted that communication satisfaction with supervisors has a positive influence on employee satisfaction (Goldhaber et al.).
That said, employee satisfaction has been an area examined by several disciplines, primarily business and communication scholars. One reason is that satisfaction has been related to job performance (Gruneberg, 1979). Few studies have explored the relationship between nonverbal immediacy displayed by supervisors and the relationship to subordinates’ job and communication satisfaction. Moreover, there is a lack of prior research that explores the relationships between the concepts of willingness to collaborate and communicator competence displayed by supervisors as they relate to their subordinates’ job and communication satisfaction. Thus, the current study enhances the study of supervisor subordinate communication by adding the influence of willingness to collaborate and communicator competence

The value of this study is three fold. First, with more and more decisions being made by teams and groups, subordinate’s willingness to work collaboratively increases the decision quality (Walker, Craig, & Stohl, 1998). Second, it is widely accepted that satisfied employees will perform at higher levels than dissatisfied workers (Gruneberg, 1979). Third, this study extended the current body of knowledge pertaining to subordinates’ communication satisfaction, job satisfaction, and their trait of willingness to collaborate, in relationship to nonverbal immediacy and communicator competence displayed by their supervisors.
Employee Satisfaction

A large body of research indicates that employee satisfaction has been a major concern of scholars in a wide variety of disciplines for over half a century (Falcione, 1974; Falcione, et al., 1977; Locke, 1969; Richmond & McCroskey, 1979; Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939). While much of the research to date has been concerned with the relationship between employee satisfaction and productivity, the findings have been mixed. Some findings indicated a positive relationship (Dunnette, Campbell, & Jaastad, 1967; King, 1970; Locke, 1969), whereas other findings indicated no relationship (Brayfield & Corckett, 1955; Vroom, 1964). As a result, researchers have created a variant condition that views employee satisfaction in a variety of conditions. Therefore, employee satisfaction may increase productivity or job performance under some circumstances or when certain communicative behaviors are displayed. These types of variant conditions that must be present in order for satisfied employee relationships to exist are a focus of this study.

A number of variables have been found to impact employee satisfaction, many of which have a peripheral relationship to communication. Notable examples include working conditions (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939) and organizational innovativeness
(Hurt & Teigen, 1977). More specifically, organizational communication researchers have widely examined the relationship between various communication variables and organizational outcomes. For example, considerable research suggests that communication is related to job satisfaction (Downs, 1977; Goldhaber, 1983; Hilgerman, 1998; Pincus, 1986). Although communicative relationships are not the only determinants of employee satisfaction, research findings have indicated that communicative relationships do predict meaningful variance in employee satisfaction. The following literature offers support for the inclusion of communication satisfaction in this study.

Communication Satisfaction

The relationship between communication and satisfaction has been an area investigated by organizational communication scholars, beginning with studies completed in the late 1970s to early 1980s. The findings of these studies established evidence of the relationship between communication and satisfaction. One example is the work of Goldhaber et al. (1978) who synthesized and reviewed all the organizational literature in the field at the time. As a result, Goldhaber et al. defined two major research perspectives for communication within organizations. The first was the information flow or process perspective that explains whether the communication flow is upward or downward in organizations. This perspective perceives an organization as a machine rather than a collection of individual employees bringing their own unique characteristics to the workplace. The information flow or process perspective also examines the structure of the organization, including the communication roles, the channel, and the message factors that influence how the organization functions.
The second research perspective was the perception/attitudes or the perception perspective. This perspective explains employees' attitudes about issues in the organization. According to Goldhaber et al.'s (1978) perception perspective, employees’ perceptions of the organization have an influence on the employees’ behaviors within the organization. The factors involved with perceptual/attitudinal research include the perceptions of climate, information adequacy, and satisfaction. The perception perspective link with communication satisfaction emerges because the multidimensional construct that examines employees' perceptions about different forms of communication.

Additional research focusing on communication satisfaction was conducted by Miles, Patrick, and King (1996). Their research examined whether job level significantly moderates the relationship between superior-subordinate communication and job satisfaction. Miles et al.'s study demonstrated that supervisor communication with employees was an important variable to consider with respect to job and communication satisfaction. The link between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction revealed in Miles et al.'s research was the impetus for the inclusion of job satisfaction in the current study. Support for the inclusion of job satisfaction is located in the following literature.

*Job Satisfaction*

Job satisfaction, communication satisfaction and supervisor communicative behaviors have been issues of concern in communication literature. These areas are of interest because higher quality performance and greater satisfaction of employees often leads to an enhanced corporate culture and greater effectiveness (Gruneberg, 1979). Focusing on job satisfaction is important in understanding how employees act and feel in
the workplace, all of which affect performance and customer service.

The relationship between job satisfaction and other variables has also attracted a great deal of research, including studies focusing on job satisfaction and its relationship to job commitment (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1982), loyalty to company (Trombetta & Rogers, 1988), the impact of positive and negative affectivity with relation to supervisor satisfaction (Iverson & Deery, 2001), and communication apprehension (Richmond, McCroskey, & Davis, 1982).

Taylor (1970) suggested that job satisfaction of subordinates was attributed to the highest possible earnings with the least amount of fatigue. Taylor’s classical theory prompted a host of studies that revealed additional reasons explaining job satisfaction, one of which lead to the formation of the human relation theories, such as Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory (Maslow, 1943) and Herzberg’s motivation-hygiene theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyder, 1959). These theorists believed that job satisfaction could only be achieved by allowing employees to make decisions, grow mentally, and fulfill intrinsic needs. These newly discovered components of job satisfaction forced supervision to place emphasis on their communicative behaviors, physical working conditions, cohesive work groups, and the empowerment of employees.

With an emphasis on supervision, Pincus’s (1986) study revealed that supervisors have an important influence on job and communication satisfaction of subordinates. Additionally, the literature reviewed for this study (Infante & Gordon, 1989; Miles, et al., 1996) supports the importance of communications between coworkers and supervisors in determining the impact of job satisfaction on employees. Another concept impacting job and communication satisfaction
and one that is relevant to this study is willingness to collaborate. The following literature offers support for its inclusion.

*Willingness to Collaborate*

According to Nutt’s (1999) research findings, over half of the decision making in organizations fail due to poor communication and inadequate decision making tactics used by supervisors. That said, with the majority of decisions being made in groups and the quality of communication that occurs within the group being the primary determinant of group satisfaction (Gouran, Hirokawa, McGee, & Miller, 1993), an investigation of collaborative communication is relevant to this study. To collaborate means to cooperate, to work together, to labor jointly, to share accountability, to engage in joint decision making characterized by mutual trust and respect, creating and sustaining a working consensus (Walker, et al., 1998). One view of collaborative decision making styles is that of Blake and Mouton (1964) and are linked to Ruble and Thomas’s (1976) behavior components of assertiveness and cooperativeness. According to Ruble and Thomas, a collaborative style is both high in assertiveness (concern for self) and cooperation (concern for others) and results in a superior decision that looks to attain full satisfaction for all group members.

From a different perspective, Cosier and Ruble (1981) stated there is a tendency for group members to reciprocate collaborative styles. Therefore, if the supervisor employs a collaborative decision-making style, his or her subordinates are likely to mimic that style. Yet, in Anderson, Martin, and Infante’s (1998) research, a person’s willingness (or non-willingness) to participate in collaborative decision-making is a trait-like construct that is fairly consistent over time.
Since many organizational decisions are now being made by groups (Greenbaum & Query, 1999), the value of collaboration is emphasized. People are born into groups, work in groups, and socialize in groups, so whether groups form for social reasons or for problem solving purposes, all groups have a task dimension, which refers to what the group does, and a relational dimension, which refers to the emotional and social support of the group members. Regardless of the reasons groups form, or their focus, both the task and relational aspects of groups are present and inseparable (Fisher, 1971). In many groups, decision making becomes the focal point requiring communicative interactions in an effort to reach a resolution. Fisher (1970) identified four phases of decision making: orientation, conflict, emergence, and reinforcement. During the conflict phase, collaborative interactions create a win-win climate which produces higher quality decisions and generates a higher level of group member satisfaction (Wall, Galanes, & Love, 1987). Moreover, Canary and Spitzberg (1989) suggested that collaboration integrates group members and promotes relationships between group members. Additionally, Folger, Pool, and Stutman (2005) suggested that collaborative styles of conflict resolution tend to be preferred by group members and result in greater overall satisfaction. However, they added that collaboration takes a great deal of time and may not be the best style for all situations. Thus, the current study investigated the effects of supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy and communicator competence in relationship to their subordinates’ willingness to collaborate.
Immediacy Behaviors

The concept of immediacy stems from the work of Mehrabian (1969, 1971, 1981) and refers to communication that enhances either the physiological or psychological closeness to another. The construct of immediacy was introduced by Mehrabian (1969) who used this term to refer to those communication behaviors which "enhance closeness to and nonverbal interaction with another" (p. 213). According to the work of Mehrabian (1971), "People are drawn toward persons and things they like, evaluate highly, and prefer; and they avoid or move away from things they dislike, evaluate negatively, or do not prefer" (p. 1). Richmond and McCroskey (2000b) suggested that immediacy is indicated by such behaviors as looking at someone, leaning toward someone, touching someone (in a non-threatening manner), sitting near someone, speaking in an animated way toward someone, and smiling at someone. Further, Richmond and McCroskey (2000b) stated that while each of these behaviors can be observed in isolation, in normal interaction they are responded to collectively. Hence, people receive impressions of immediate behaviors holistically, although it is possible for them to be aware of each component in the larger pattern of communicative behaviors.

According to Infante, Rancer, and Womack (2003) immediacy is associated with behaviors that signal feelings of warmth, closeness, openness, and involvement with other persons. Additionally, Tjosvold (1984) reported that subordinates’ perceptions of openness by supervisors are related to nonverbal warmth communicated through eye gaze, posture, facial expression, and voice tone, which are nonverbal immediacy behaviors. Further, Jablin’s (1979) research indicated that an open communication
relationship between superior and subordinate is one in which each party perceives the other as a willing and receptive listener and refrains from responses that might be perceived as negative relational feedback. Jablin’s research findings demonstrate that subordinates relate openness to job satisfaction.

During the past two decades, the topic of teacher immediacy has received a great deal of attention in the communication literature (Andersen, 1979, 1985; Andersen, Norton, & Nussbaum, 1981; Christophel, 1990; Gorham, 1988; Gorham & Zakahi, 1990; Kearney, Plax, & Wendt-Wasco, 1985; McCroskey, Richmond, Sallinen, Fayer, & Barraclough, 1995; Neuliep, 1995; Richmond, Gorham, & McCroskey, 1987; Sanders & Wiseman, 1990). However, the effect of nonverbal immediacy in the organizational setting involving the relationship between superiors and subordinates has received considerably less attention, with the exception of Richmond and McCroskey (2000a) and Koermer, Goldstein, and Fortson (1993).

According to Richmond and McCroskey (2000a), immediacy behaviors stimulate reciprocity of immediacy; therefore, subordinates report more satisfaction with supervisors who exhibit nonverbal immediacy behaviors. Additionally, Koermer et al. (1993) suggested that supervisors who use immediacy behaviors make subordinates feel more valued, respected, and relationally attractive. Furthermore, Richmond and McCroskey (2000b) proposed the principle of immediate communication, which they argued will apply in any interpersonal communication context. The principle these authors proposed is that the more communicators employ immediate behaviors, the more others will like, evaluate highly, and prefer such communicators. On the other hand, the
less communicators employ immediate behaviors the more others will dislike, evaluate negatively, and reject such communicators.

*Communicator Competence*

Another principle applicable to the current study is that of communicator competence. Communication competence is an overarching construct that encompasses elements of knowledge, motivation, skill, behavior, and effectiveness (Spitzberg, 1983). “Competent interaction can be viewed as a form of interpersonal influence, in which an individual is faced with the task of fulfilling communicative functions and goals (effectiveness) while maintaining conversational and interpersonal norms (appropriateness)” (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1981, p. 1).

According to Cushman and Craig (1976), communicator competence involves the ability of the individual to display competencies in areas such as listening, cueing, and negotiating. Additionally, Stohl, (1984) suggested that a communicatively competent individual possesses the ability to employ communicative resources such as language, gestures, and voice effectively in the pursuit of social goals. From another perspective, Bochner and Kelly (1974) specified five skills they believed necessary for an individual to be considered a competent communicator. These skills are descriptiveness, self-disclosure, empathetic communication, owning, and behavioral flexibility. Larson, Backlund, Redmond, and Barbour (1978) defined communicator competence as “The ability of an individual to demonstrate knowledge of the appropriate communication behavior in a given situation” (p. 16). Monge, Bachman, Dillard, and Eisenberg (1981) suggested that "The fundamental proposition underlying virtually all communicator
competence research is that competent communicators are those who are effective at achieving their goals" (p. 506). Additionally, Monge et al. argued that communicator competence should include observable communication behaviors, namely encoding and decoding ability.

Despite the vast amounts of research focused on competent communication, few have directly examined its relationship to subordinates’ job and communication satisfaction. One exception is a study conducted by Berman and Hellweg (1989), which showed that supervisor communicator competence was related to subordinates’ perceived satisfaction with their supervisors. A second study examined the relationship between subordinate perceptions of supervisor’s communication skills, including communicator competence, and subordinate’s level of organizational identification (Myers & Kassing, 1998). Additionally, research findings by (Falcione et al. 1977; Infante & Gorden, 1979) indicated a positive relationship between supervisors’ communicator competence and subordinates’ job satisfaction. Thus, there appears to be a gap in the communicator competence research with respect to the relationship between nonverbal immediacy and the willingness to collaborate trait.

**Hypotheses and Research Questions**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between supervisor and subordinate with respect to communicative behaviors. Based on the limited amount of prior research, the following hypotheses and research questions were advanced:

**H1a:** There will be a positive relationship between supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy and subordinates’ job satisfaction.
H1b: There will be a positive relationship between supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy and subordinates’ communication satisfaction.

RQ1: Will there be a significant difference in subordinates’ job satisfaction contingent upon whether they perceive their supervisor as (high vs. low) in nonverbal immediacy?

RQ2: Is there a significant difference in subordinates’ communication satisfaction contingent upon whether they perceive their supervisor as (high vs. low) in nonverbal immediacy?

RQ3: Is there a significant difference in subordinates’ willingness to collaborate contingent upon whether they perceive their supervisor as (high vs. low) in nonverbal immediacy?

To collaborate means to cooperate, to work together, to labor jointly, to share accountability, to engage in joint decision making characterized by mutual trust and respect, creating and sustaining a working consensus (Walker et al., 1998). Furthermore, following Anderson et al.’s (1998) research, an employee’s willingness (or non-willingness) to participate in collaborative decision-making is a trait-like construct that is fairly consistent over time. Moreover, Ruble and Thomas’ (1976) study showed that a collaborative style results in a superior decision that looks to attain full satisfaction for all group members. Hence, the current study advanced the following research questions:

RQ4: Is there a relationship between subordinates’ willingness to collaborate and their communication satisfaction?

RQ5: Is there a relationship between subordinates’ willingness to collaborate and their job satisfaction?
The findings of two prior studies (Koe rmer et al., 1993; Richmond & McCroskey, 2000a) suggested that a relationship exists between supervisors who display nonverbal immediacy behaviors and subordinates’ communication and job satisfaction. Additionally, other studies (Folger et al., 2005; Walker et al., 1998) have found that individuals working in a collaborative decision making environment tend to have greater overall member satisfaction. Therefore, the following research question was advanced:

**RQ6:** Is there a relationship between supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy and subordinates’ willingness to collaborate?

Communication competence has been examined from a variety of perspectives. Spitzberg (1983) stressed the importance of contextual factors in determining competence, whereas Miller’s (1978) work emphasized situational factors as primary determinants of communicative competence. It seems that, a communicatively competent individual is one who possesses the ability to employ communicative resources involving language, gestures, and voice effectively in the pursuit of social goals (Stohl, 1984). Despite the variety of perspectives and definitions, a gap in the research exists with respect to evaluating the communicator competence of supervisors for effects on subordinates. Hence, the following hypothesis and research questions were advanced.

**H2:** There will be a positive relationship between supervisors’ communicator competence and their nonverbal immediacy.

**RQ7:** Is there a relationship between supervisors’ communicator competence and subordinates’ job satisfaction?
**RQ8:** Is there a relationship between supervisors’ communicator competence and subordinates’ communication satisfaction?

**RQ9:** Is there a relationship between supervisors’ communicator competence and subordinates’ willingness to collaborate?

**RQ10:** Is there a significant difference in subordinates’ job satisfaction contingent upon whether they perceive their supervisor as (high vs. low) in communicator competence?

**RQ11:** Is there a significant difference in subordinates’ communication satisfaction contingent upon whether they perceive their supervisor as (high vs. low) in communicator competence?
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants \((N = 275, \text{men, 132; women, 143})\) included undergraduate and graduate students at a large Mid-Western University working full-time or part-time for a variety of companies. They were a mix of hourly and salaried employees. Of the participants, 142 reported working full-time and 133 reported working part-time. Participants \((N = 129)\) reported working for a female supervisor and \((N = 146)\) reported working for a male supervisor. Respondents ranged in age from 18 to 60 years old \((M = 28.27, SD = 9.54)\).

Procedures

The questionnaire for the study was distributed by the author and participation was on a voluntary basis. The questionnaire utilized quantitative research involving a variety of measurement instruments, which included scales measuring subordinates’ perceptions of communicative behaviors displayed by their supervisors. The only requirement to participation was that the participants had to be currently working a minimum of 20 hours per week.

Participants who agreed to be part of the study were provided with a written explanation of their rights. They were then informed that their completion of the
questionnaire would indicate their consent to participate in the study. After reading over the written explanation the participants completed the questionnaire. Any additional questions were answered by the author at that time and participants were thanked for their time. The passive consent form located in the cover letter of the questionnaire is attached as Appendix A, the questionnaire is attached as Appendix B, and a copy of the Human Subjects Approval is attached as Appendix C.

**Measures**

*Job satisfaction* was measured by the Job in General Scale (JIG) (Ironson, Smith, Brannick, Gibson & Paul, 1989), which measures overall job satisfaction. The JIG scale was modified from its original 18 items to 8 items (Abridged JIG (AJIG); Russell, Spitzmüller, Lin, Stanton, Smith, & Ironson, 2004) and was the instrument utilized for the current study. A 5-point Likert-type response format (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) was used in the current study instead of the original scale formatting (i.e., using 0 for “no,” 1 for “?” and 3 for “yes) to insure overall consistency throughout the questionnaire. The AJIG Scale has been found to have 8 adjectives, with a Cronbach’s coefficient alpha of .87 and correlated strongly with the original scale, $r = .97$ (Russell et al.). Cronbach’s coefficient alpha for the current study was .88 ($M = 29.29$, $SD = 6.91$).

*Communication Satisfaction* was measured by the Interpersonal Communication Satisfaction Inventory (ICSI) developed by Hecht (1978), which has been widely used in the investigation of communication satisfaction between superiors and subordinates (Lamude, Danials, & Graham, 1988), physicians and patients (Buller & Buller, 1987),
and police officers and citizens (Glauser & Tullar, 1985). The purpose of the scale is to
measure interpersonal communication satisfaction. This scale has been used in
employee-supervisor relationships because of the interpersonal nature of communication
that occurs between them. This scale’s items were adopted for use in the organizational
communication context. The modified version for this study asked participants about the
latest conversation they had with his/her immediate supervisor. A 5-point Likert-type
scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) was used in the study. Prior studies
reported that the 19-item questionnaire produced reliabilities ranging from .84 to .97 and
strong validity (Hecht, 1978). The Cronbach’s coefficient alpha reliability for the current
study was .93 (M = 66.57, SD = 14.52).

Willingness to Collaborate was measured by Anderson et al.’s (1998)
Decision-Making Collaboration Scale. The original inventory consisted of 42 verbal and
nonverbal items to measure the construct that was reduced to the current 13 item
instrument measured on a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from 5 = strong agreement to
1 = strong disagreement. The instrument has a proven alpha reliability of .81 and strong
validity (Anderson et al.). The Cronbach’s coefficient alpha reliability for the current
study was .81 (M = 46.33, SD = 7.48).

Nonverbal Immediacy was measured by utilizing the Nonverbal Immediacy
Scale-Observer Report (NIS-O) (Richmond et al., 2003). The instrument was measured on a
5-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. This is the
most up-to-date measure of nonverbal immediacy as an other-or-observer report. The
NIS-O instrument may be used for any target person whereas earlier measures were
designed only for observations of teachers (Richmond, Gorham, & McCroskey, 1987). According to Richmond et al. (2003), earlier measures had problematic alpha reliability estimates, whereas the NIS-O has produced alpha reliabilities of .90 and strong validity. The Cronbach’s coefficient alpha reliability for the current study was .92 ($M = 91.13$, $SD = 16.79$).

Communicator Competence was measured by the 12 item Communicator Competence instrument developed by Monge et al. (1982). The instrument was measured on a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from $1 = $ strongly disagree to $5 = $ strongly agree. The instrument has proven reliability ranging from .81 to .93 and validity ranging from .66 to 86 (Rubin, Palmgreen, & Sypher, 1994). The coefficient alpha for the current research study was .92 ($M = 44.63$, $SD = 9.35$).
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

H1a predicted a positive relationship between supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy and subordinates’ job satisfaction. The hypothesis was tested by Pearson’s $r$ analysis and revealed a moderate and positive relationship between nonverbal immediacy and job satisfaction, $r = .42, p < .01$. The next hypothesis (H1b) predicted a positive relationship between supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy and subordinates’ communication satisfaction. The hypothesis was also examined by Pearson’s $r$ analysis and revealed a strong and positive relationship between nonverbal immediacy and subordinates’ communication satisfaction $r = .60, p < .01$. Table 1 contains the descriptive statistics for all the variables examined in this study.

Table 1

| Descriptive Statistics for Supervisor and Subordinate Communication Variables |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Communication satisfaction   | N 275 | Minimum 22.00 | Maximum 95.00 | Mean 66.5709 | Std. Deviation 14.51495 |
| Willingness to collaborate    | N 275 | Minimum 29.00 | Maximum 64.00 | Mean 46.3309 | Std. Deviation 7.47572 |
| Nonverbal immediacy           | N 275 | Minimum 46.00 | Maximum 126.00 | Mean 91.1273 | Std. Deviation 16.78770 |
| Communicator competence       | N 275 | Minimum 15.00 | Maximum 60.00 | Mean 44.6364 | Std. Deviation 9.34997 |
| Job satisfaction              | N 275 | Minimum 8.00  | Maximum 44.00 | Mean 28.9018 | Std. Deviation 6.50725 |
An investigation of whether a relationship exists between the communication trait of willingness to collaborate and subordinates’ job and communication satisfaction were addressed in RQ4 and RQ5. These research questions were also investigated by Pearson’s $r$ analysis and revealed a slight and positive relationship between the variables of willingness to collaborate and subordinates’ job satisfaction $r = .23, p < .01$ and between the variables of willingness to collaborate and subordinates’ communication satisfaction $r = .35, p < .01$. Table 2 presents the correlations between these variables.

An investigation of whether a relationship existed between perceptions of supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy and their subordinates’ willingness to collaborate was sought in RQ6. Pearson’s $r$ analysis revealed a slight and positive relationship between perceptions of supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy and their subordinates’ willingness to collaborate, $r = .33, p < .01$ (see Table 2).

The study also investigated the variable of perceived supervisor communicator competence in relationship to a variety of outcome variables presented in RQ7, RQ8, RQ9 and H2. The relationship between supervisors’ perceived communicator competence and their nonverbal immediacy was tested by Pearson’s $r$ analysis and revealed a moderate and positive relationship between the variables, $r = .57, p < .01$. A strong and positive relationship was indicated between supervisors’ perceived communicator competence and their subordinates’ reported job satisfaction, $r = .61, p < .01$ and their subordinates’ communication satisfaction $r = .78, p < .01$. Additionally, a slight positive relationship was indicated between perceptions of supervisors’ communicator
competence and their subordinates’ reported willingness to collaborate, $r = .28, p < .01$.

Table 2 contains the data that illustrate the relationships between the variables.

**Table 2**

*Correlations between Supervisor Subordinate Communication Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Job satisfaction</th>
<th>Communication satisfaction</th>
<th>Willingness to collaborate</th>
<th>Communication competence</th>
<th>Nonverbal immediacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job satisfaction</strong></td>
<td>---</td>
<td>.586**</td>
<td>.226**</td>
<td>.614**</td>
<td>.419**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication satisfaction</strong></td>
<td>.586**</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>.346**</td>
<td>.776**</td>
<td>.603**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Willingness to collaborate</strong></td>
<td>.226**</td>
<td>.346**</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>.275**</td>
<td>.332**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication competence</strong></td>
<td>.614**</td>
<td>.776**</td>
<td>.275**</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>.567**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nonverbal immediacy</strong></td>
<td>.419**</td>
<td>.603**</td>
<td>.332**</td>
<td>.567**</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. ** = Correlation significant at the 0.01 level, * = correlation significant at the 0.05 level

An investigation of differences in perceived displays of supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy (high vs. low) for effects on their subordinates was examined. Several research questions were investigated by ANOVA analysis and revealed the following findings. Analysis of RQ1 indicated significant differences for supervisors’ (high vs. low) in displays of nonverbal immediacy and their subordinates’ job satisfaction, $F (1, 273) = 48.49, p < .001$. Those subordinates who perceived their supervisor as exhibiting higher displays of nonverbal immediacy ($M = 31.22, SD = 4.80$), as opposed to
supervisors perceived as low in displays of nonverbal immediacy ($M = 26.16, SD = 7.18$), reported higher levels of job satisfaction. Table 3 presents these statistics.

Table 3

**ANOVA for Variables of Supervisors’ Nonverbal Immediacy and Subordinates’ Job Satisfaction.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subordinates’ job satisfaction</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>1749.83</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1749.83</td>
<td>48.49</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>9852.52</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>36.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11602.35</td>
<td>274</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ2 sought to reveal whether significant differences in subordinates’ communication satisfaction were contingent upon whether they perceived their supervisor as (high vs. low) in nonverbal immediacy. ANOVA analysis indicated significant differences for supervisors’ (high vs. low) displays of nonverbal immediacy and subordinates’ communication satisfaction, $F (1, 273) = 98.43, p < .001$. Supervisors seen as being high in displays of nonverbal immediacy ($M = 73.43, SD = 11.42$), as opposed to supervisors seen as low in displays of nonverbal immediacy ($M = 58.46, SD = 13.29$), engendered greater subordinate communication satisfaction. Table 4 presents the statistics.
RQ3 sought to reveal whether significant differences in subordinates’ willingness to collaborate were contingent upon whether they perceived their supervisor as (high vs. low) in nonverbal immediacy. ANOVA analysis indicated significant differences for supervisors’ (high vs. low) displays of nonverbal immediacy and subordinates’ willingness to collaborate, $F(1, 273) = 25.85$, $p < .001$. Supervisors who were perceived as high in displays of nonverbal immediacy ($M = 48.35$, $SD = 6.73$), as opposed to supervisors seen as lower in nonverbal immediacy ($M = 43.94$, $SD = 7.63$) engendered greater subordinate willingness to collaborate. Table 5 presents the statistics.

An investigation of whether differences in displays of supervisors’ communicator competence (high vs. low) effects subordinates were presented in RQ10 and RQ11. ANOVA analysis of RQ10 revealed significant and positive findings for supervisors’ (high vs. low) displays of communicator competence and subordinates’ job satisfaction,
\( F (1, 273) = 88.23, \ p < .001 \), with supervisors high in communicator competence \((M = 31.79, \ SD = 5.16)\) and supervisors low in communicator competence \((M = 25.33, \ SD = 6.24)\). Table 6 presents the statistics.

Table 5

ANOVA for Variables of Supervisors’ Nonverbal Immediacy and Subordinates’ Willingness to Collaborate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subordinates’ willingness to collaborate</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>1324.42</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1324.42</td>
<td>25.85</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>13988.46</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>51.24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15312.89</td>
<td>274</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6

ANOVA for Variables of Supervisors’ Communicator Competence and Subordinates’ Job Satisfaction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subordinates’ job satisfaction</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>2833.75</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2833.75</td>
<td>88.23</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>8768.60</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>32.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11602.35</td>
<td>274</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A final research question sought to reveal whether significant differences in subordinates’ communication satisfaction were contingent upon supervisors being (high vs. low) in communicator competence. ANOVA analysis indicated significant differences for supervisors’ (high vs. low) displays of communicator competence and subordinates’ communication satisfaction, $F(1, 273) = 175.03, p < .001$. Supervisors with higher perceived displays of communicator competence ($M = 74.72, SD = 10.97$) versus supervisors who were perceived as low in displays of communicator competence ($M = 56.50, SD = 11.80$) engendered greater levels of subordinate communication satisfaction. Table 7 presents the statistics.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subordinates’ job satisfaction</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>22551.78</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22551.78</td>
<td>175.03</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>35175.58</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>128.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57727.37</td>
<td>274</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between communicative behaviors displayed by supervisors, and subordinates’ job and communication satisfaction, and willingness to collaborate. Research examining the effects supervisors have on subordinate job satisfaction and communication satisfaction have received of a great deal of attention (Falcione, 1974; Falcione et al. 1977; Goldhaber et al. 1978; Richmond & McCroskey, 1979). However, few studies have explored the relationship between nonverbal immediacy behaviors displayed by supervisors and employee job and communication satisfaction. Scant research has explored the relationship between the concepts of nonverbal immediacy and willingness to collaborate, as well as job and communication satisfaction. Moreover, research examining the effects of supervisors’ communicative competence as it relates to their subordinates’ job and communication satisfaction was found to be scarce in communication scholarship.

The findings of the present study support the hypothesis which predicted a positive relationship between nonverbal immediacy and communicator competence. One reason to find a positive relationship between supervisors’ displays of nonverbal immediacy and communicator competence may be due to the similarities in the
communicative constructs. Nonverbal immediacy includes displays of warmth, openness, and use of gestures (see, Infante, Rancer, & Womack, 2003). Similarly, being a competent communicator is defined by skills such as listening, giving feedback, and instructing (Jablin, Cude, House, Lee, & Roth, 1994). Further, Wheeless and Berryman-Fink (1985) have suggested that communication competence had two dimensions that included behaviors such as empathy, listening, and other orientation. The findings of this study enhance communicator competence literature by providing the connection between displays of nonverbal immediacy and that of a competent communicator.

The present study also explored supervisor’s nonverbal immediacy related to their subordinates’ perceived communication satisfaction. Findings indicated a positive relationship between supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy and subordinates’ communication and job satisfaction. Additional findings indicated that a significant difference exists between supervisors who displayed (high vs. low) levels of nonverbal immediacy related to subordinates job and communication satisfaction. They suggest that subordinates who perceived their supervisors as being high in displays of nonverbal immediacy reported significantly higher levels of job and communications satisfaction. Additionally, the present study’s findings support prior research (see: Koermer et al., 1993) who indicated that supervisors who use immediacy behaviors make subordinates feel more valued, respected, and relationally attractive, and Richmond and McCroskey’s (2000b) principle of immediate communication. The principle these authors proposed is that the more communicators employ immediate behaviors, the more others will like, evaluate highly, and prefer such communicators. On the other hand, the less
communicators employ immediate behaviors the more others will dislike, evaluate negatively, and reject such communicators. Utilizing the findings from this study in supervisor training programs emphasizing the use of nonverbal immediacy, may result in greater job and communication satisfaction for the employees.

In addition to nonverbal immediacy, the study’s research investigated the relationship between supervisors’ communicator competence and subordinates’ job and communication satisfaction. Findings indicated a strong and positive relationship between the perceptions of supervisors’ communicator competence and subordinates communication and job satisfaction. The findings supported prior research (Falcione et al. 1977; Infante & Gorden, 1979) that suggest a positive relationship may exist between supervisors’ communicator competence and subordinates’ job satisfaction. Moreover, the study found that subordinates who perceived their supervisors as competent communicators reported significantly higher levels of job and communications satisfaction than did subordinates who perceived their supervisors as less competent communicators. Support for these findings is based on Stohl’s (1984) definition of a competent communicator. Stohl suggests that a competent communicator is an individual possessing the ability to employ communicative resources including language, gestures, and voice effectively in the pursuit of social goals. Additionally, the findings of the present study extends prior communication research by Berman and Hellweg (1989), whose findings indicated that supervisor communicator competence was related to subordinates’ perceived satisfaction. The implications of the current study’s findings suggest that supervisors need to be cognizant of their communicative behaviors and strive
to be seen as competent communicators by their subordinates. The results of supervisors being seen as competent communicators may lead to increased satisfaction of their subordinates ultimately resulting in greater productivity, as indicated by Gruneberg (1979) whose research suggested that satisfied employees will perform at higher levels than dissatisfied workers.

The current study also investigated the trait of willingness to collaborate. According to Anderson et al. (1998), the trait of willingness to collaborate is defined as a person’s willingness (or non-willingness) to participate in collaborative decision-making and is a trait-like construct that is fairly consistent over time. That being said, the current study sought to examine the relationship between subordinates’ willingness to collaborate and their job and communication satisfaction. Additionally, the study’s research sought to examine the relationship between subordinates’ willingness to collaborate and supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy and communicator competence. The findings indicated a weaker, yet significant and positive relationship between willingness to collaborate and the other variables. This finding may be explained by Anderson et al.’s definition suggesting that willingness to collaborate is a trait-like construct that is fairly consistent over time. Thus traits are not as malleable to communicative influences. That is not to say that traits are hidebound, they may be influenced by situations or contexts (Andersen, 1987). Future researchers may want to investigate why this occurred in the present study.

Of the variables examined in relationship to willingness to collaborate, communication satisfaction, and supervisor’s nonverbal immediacy had the strongest relationships. These may be situational factors that influence a subordinates’ willingness to work
collaboratively. One reason to find a stronger relationship between the variables of willingness to collaborate and communication satisfaction, may be based on Ruble and Thomas’s (1976) definition of collaborative style which is both high in assertiveness (concern for self) and cooperation (concern for others) and results in a superior decision that looks to attain full satisfaction for all group members.

That said, it is also reasonable to find a stronger relationship between subordinates’ willingness to collaborate and supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy based on communicative similarities including those immediacy behaviors of closeness, openness, and involvement with other persons, and collaborative behaviors such as working together, shared accountability, and joint decision making characterized by mutual trust and respect. These similarities between willingness to collaborate and nonverbal immediacy offer support for the findings of the final research question that sought to examine if difference in subordinates’ willingness to collaborate were contingent upon supervisors’ displays of nonverbal immediacy. The findings revealed that high levels of nonverbal immediacy displayed by supervisors’ resulted in elevated levels of willingness to collaborate by subordinates. The findings suggest that the trait of willingness to collaborate may be affected by situational factors such as subordinates’ perceptions of their supervisors’ displays of nonverbal immediacy. These results indicate the need for training programs that emphasize supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy due to the influence these communicative behaviors have on subordinates’ willingness to collaborate.
**Limitations and Recommendations**

Although the research presented in this study demonstrated significant results with respect to supervisor and subordinate communicative behaviors, it is not without limitations. One limitation is the sampling. Although the sample size itself was adequate, the participants were primarily working college students. Future studies may want to include participants from a variety of industries comprised of supervisors and subordinates who are established in their careers.

Another limitation involves the limited geographic region from which the sample was obtained. Cross-cultural research may add richness to the study as McCroskey and colleagues did with their teacher nonverbal immediacy studies (McCroskey, Richmond, Sallinen, Fayer, & Barraclough, 1995, 1996). Since organizational communication studies have not focused on the cross-cultural effects of supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy this may be an area of future research.

A final recommendation for future research could involve an examination of supervisors’ perceptions of their own communicative behaviors compared to those of their employees. This viewpoint may emphasize the need for organizations to implement training programs that both raise awareness and improve supervisors’ communicative skills.

**Summary**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between communicative behaviors displayed by supervisors, as they relate to their subordinate job and communication satisfaction, including their willingness to collaborate. The findings
indicated that subordinates who experienced high levels of job and communication satisfaction, had supervisors who were high in displays of nonverbal immediacy and communicator competence. These results can be extended to demonstrate the link between supervisors' communicative behaviors and their subordinates’ performance. According to Gruneberg (1979), greater satisfaction of employees can lead to higher quality performance.

Additionally, results from this study indicated a positive relationship between supervisors' nonverbal immediacy and their subordinates’ willingness to collaborate. This relationship is notable due to the increased number of decisions within organizations that are being made by groups or committees. The open nature of nonverbal immediacy makes collaborative decision making possible because collaboration requires individuals to engage in joint decision making characterized by mutual trust and respect, creating and sustaining a working consensus (Walker et al., 1998).

Lastly, the findings of this study suggest that improved communication throughout an organization should lead to increased employee job and communication satisfaction, as well as their willingness to collaborate. These types of communication may contribute to greater organizational effectiveness and a productive working climate.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A
PASSIVE CONSENT

September, 2005

Dear Participants:

I am a graduate student in the School of Communication at the University of Akron. I am conducting a study focusing on verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors and their relationship to satisfaction. I appreciate your volunteering to complete the questionnaire designed to measure these concepts. The only criterion is that you must be working full-time or part-time at least 20 hours per week.

Do not put your name on this questionnaire or identify yourself or your supervisor. Please complete the questionnaire independently and be sure to read each section carefully and answer all questions honestly. If you choose not to answer any question, there is no penalty; furthermore, there is no right or wrong answers. Additionally, when responding, if you have more than one immediate supervisor, please only keep one in mind. It should take 15 minutes to complete this questionnaire. Your responses to the questions will be part of a large data set, the results of which will be used as the research for my graduate thesis. Upon completion, a copy of the research findings will be posted in the School of Communication outside room 108 Kolbe Hall.

The Human Subjects Review Board at The University of Akron has approved the study. If you have questions or concerns, contact Sharon McWhorther, Associate Director, Office of Research Services, 330-972-7666. Or, you may contact my thesis director Dr. Carolyn M. Anderson, Professor, School of Communication, at 330-972-6218.

Paul Madlook
Graduate Student

The University of Akron has an Equal Employment and Affirmative Action Policy.
APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

*Directions:* The following statements concern communicating at work. In responding, think of the communication relationship you have with your immediate supervisor. Choose the number that best describes how you feel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>NEUTRAL</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When communicating with my immediate supervisor I feel ......

1. He or she lets me know that I am communicating effectively.
2. Nothing is ever accomplished.
3. I would like to continue having conversations like ours.
4. He or she genuinely wants to get to know me.
5. Very dissatisfied with our conversations.
6. Like I have something else to do.
7. I am able to present myself as I want him or her to view me.
8. He or she shows me that he/she understands what I say.
9. Very satisfied with our conversations.
10. He or she expresses a lot of interest in what I have to say.
11. I do NOT enjoy our conversations.
12. He or she does NOT provide support for what he/she says.
13. That I can talk about anything with my immediate supervisor.
14. That we each get to say what we want.
15. That we can laugh easily together.
17. He or she changes the topic when his/her feelings are brought into the conversation.
18. He or she frequently said things that add little to the conversation.
19. We often talk about things that I am NOT interested in.
**Directions:** Below are a set of statements concerning your willingness to participate in the decision-making process. Please respond to the items by keeping in mind how you react when confronted with decision-making situations requested by your immediate supervisor. If you have more than one, please respond with only one in mind. etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>NEUTRAL</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. When he or she tells me I should do something, I insist upon knowing why.

2. When there are terms I do not understand, usually I won’t bother to ask what they mean.

3. I bargain with him or her when I think it is needed.

4. Often I do not explore alternative solutions.

5. I take charge when decisions need to be made.

6. I enjoy participating in decision making.

7. Often I do not argue my point of view when conflicting views exist.

8. I do not ask about alternative solutions.

9. I tend to avoid offering suggestions for options.

10. Most of the time I initiate suggestions.

11. Usually I speak frankly about how I feel.

12. If I do not understand all of the options, I keep quiet.

13. I look others in the eyes when I disagree.
**Directions:** Below are a set of statements concerning your immediate supervisor's nonverbal behaviors. (Nonverbal behaviors are those communication events that transcend spoken or written words). Indicate how likely it is for your immediate supervisor to engage in these behaviors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERY OFTEN</th>
<th>OFTEN</th>
<th>OCCASIONALLY</th>
<th>RARELY</th>
<th>NEVER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When my immediate supervisor talks to me, he/she ......

1. uses her/his hands and arms to gesture.
2. touches me on the shoulder or arm.
3. uses a monotone or dull voice.
4. looks over or away from me.
5. moves away from me when I touch her/him.
6. has a relaxed body position.
7. frowns at me.
8. avoids eye contact with me.
9. has a tense body position.
10. sits close or stands close to me.
11. voice is monotonous or dull.
12. uses a variety of vocal expressions.
13. gestures while talking.
14. is animated.
15. has a bland facial expression.
16. moves closer to me.
When my immediate supervisor talks to me, he/she …… mwi

___ 17. looks directly at me.

___ 18. appears to be stiff.

___ 19. has a lot of vocal variety.

___ 20. avoids gesturing while talking.

___ 21. leans toward me.

___ 22. maintains eye contact with me.

___ 23. tries not to sit or stand close to me.

___ 24. leans away from me.

___ 25. smiles while talking.

___ 26. avoids touching me.

Directions: Think of your job in general. All in all, what is it like most of the time? Please indicate your response by writing the number that best describes how you feel about the statement. jg

STRONGLY AGREE AGREE NEUTRAL DISAGREE STRONGLY DISAGREE

___ 1. Good

___ 2. Undesirable

___ 3. Better than most

___ 4. Disagreeable

___ 5. Makes me content

___ 6. Excellent
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>NEUTRAL</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Enjoyable

8. Poor

*Directions:* In this series of questions I would like you to describe how your supervisor communicates. Think about his/her behavior in general, rather than about a specific situation. Please indicate your response by writing the number that best describes how you feel about the statement. Co

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>NEUTRAL</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*My immediate supervisor...*

1. has a good command of the language.

2. is sensitive to my needs of the moment.

3. typically gets right to the point.

4. pays attention to what I say to him or her.

5. deals with me effectively.

6. is a good listener.

7. is difficult to understand when communicating in written form.

8. expresses his or her ideas clearly.

9. is difficult to understand when he or she speaks to me.

10. generally says the right thing at the right time.

11. is easy to talk to.

12. usually responds to messages (memos, phone calls, reports, etc.) quickly.
Please provide the following information:

1. I am a Man _____ Woman _____

2. I am _____ years old.

3. Are you a full-time or part-time employee (please circle)

4. Years I worked for the company _____

5. Is your immediate supervisor a Man or Woman (please circle)

6. My immediate supervisor is approximately _____ years old

7. Your level of education (please circle): high school / some college / associates degree / bachelors degree / advanced degree(s)
APPENDIX C

HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL

Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs
Akron, OH 44325-2102
(330) 972-7666 Office
(330) 972-6281 Fax

September 27, 2005

Paul Madlock
14Z Fulmer Ave.
Akron, Ohio 44312

Mr. Madlock:

The University of Akron’s Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) completed a review of the protocol entitled "Supervisors’ Nonverbal Intimacy Behaviors and their Relationship to Subordinates’ Communication Satisfaction, Job Satisfaction, Willingness to Collaborate and the Perception of their Supervisor’s Communicator Competence". The IRB application number assigned to this project is 20050907.

The protocol was reviewed on September 23, 2005 and qualified for exemption from continuing IRB review. The protocol represents minimal risk to subjects and matches the following federal category for exemption:

- (2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) Information is recorded in such a manner that subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to subjects; AND (ii) any disclosure of responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of civil or criminal liability or be damaging to subjects’ financial standing, employability or reputation

Enclosed is a copy of the informed consent document, which the IRB has approved for your use in this research. In addition, your request for a waiver of documentation of informed consent, as permitted under 45 CFR 46.117(c), is also approved.

Annual continuation applications are not required for exempt projects. If you make any changes or modifications to the study’s design or procedures that either increase the risk to subjects or include activities that do not fall within one of the categories exempted from the regulations, please contact the IRB first, to discuss whether or not a request for change must be submitted. Any such changes or modifications must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to their implementation.

Please retain this letter for your files. If the research is being conducted for a master’s thesis or doctoral dissertation, the student must file a copy of this letter with the thesis or dissertation.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Sharon McWhorter
Associate Director

Cc: Department Chair
    Carolyn Anderson, Advisor
    PMW Allen, IRB Chair