DO ACTIONS REALLY SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS?: INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTS OF NONVERBAL IMMEDIACY AND VERBALLY AGGRESSIVE MESSAGES ON PERCEPTIONS OF A MANAGERS PERCEIVED LEVEL OF CREDIBILITY, CARING, AND COMMUNICATOR STYLE.

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DO ACTIONS REALLY SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS?: INVESTIGATING THE
EFFECTS OF NONVERBAL IMMEDIACY AND VERBALLY AGGRESSIVE
MESSAGES ON PERCEPTIONS OF A MANAGER'S PERCEIVED LEVEL OF
CREDIBILITY, CARING, AND COMMUNICATOR STYLE.

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CHAPTER I

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Berlo (1960) illustrates how important it is that we have a working understanding of human communicative behaviors and practices. He informs the reader that the average person spends about 70% of his or her life communicating. Unfortunately, the ways in which we communicate can be, and at times are in fact, destructive. Research has uncovered that some people are more prone to this dysfunctional behavior than others, specifically in the case of those with predispositions (personality traits) to communicate in a verbally aggressive manner.

In today’s technologically advanced world, many psycho-biologists are turning to neurological activity and biochemical signatures (traits) in order to better understand human behavior in depth. Psycho-biologists are turning to traits research because personality traits heavily influence how we communicate on an everyday basis (Rancer & Nicotera, 2006). Although some people are more so prone to being verbally aggressive, we all possess the capacity to become “aggressive, and undoubtedly, all of us have at one time or another attacked someone who offended us— [either] in our thoughts or verbally, if not in an open assault” (Berkowitz, 1998, p. 263).
There has been an abundance of research investigating and finding support for the notion that certain forms of verbal aggression are destructive in a variety of contexts (Avtgis & Rancer, 2010; Rancer & Avtgis, 2006). Within the organizational context, detrimental effects have been found concerning verbal aggression within superior-subordinate communication (Gorden, Infante & Graham, 1988; Gorden, Infante & Izzo 1988; Infante & Gorden, 1985, 1987, 1989 & 1991). However, according to Richmond and McCroskey (2000a), subordinates who reported having a superior who was nonverbally immediate, also reported as being generally more satisfied with the superior in question. In addition, Koermer, Goldstein, and Fortson (1993) found that subordinates reported feeling more valued, respected, and relationally attractive when reporting that their superiors were verbally and nonverbally immediate. In light of this, there exists a need to better understand the ways superiors communicate with their subordinates. Therefore, the purpose of this study will be to better understand the positive role nonverbal immediacy plays, and the destructive, deleterious effects verbal aggression yields within a workplace setting. This will be accomplished by investigating how a manager’s use of verbally aggressive messages and nonverbal immediacy, influences perceptions of that manager’s competence, character, caring, as well as the influence these behaviors have on the relaxed, friendly, and attentive dimensions of the communicator style construct.

*Verbally Aggressive Behavior*

Verbal aggressiveness is conceptualized as a communication trait (Infante & Wigley, 1986). A communication trait represents a subset of personality traits. Infante, Rancer and Womack (2003), define communication traits as “an abstraction constructed
to account for enduring consistencies and differences in message-sending and message-receiving behaviors among individuals” (p. 77). The communication trait perspective allows for scholars to understand the lasting consistencies and differences found in the sending/receiving of messages both to and from individuals we communicate with on an everyday basis.

Several scholars have provided definitions for what they prescribe as aggression (Avtgis & Rancer, 2010; Infante, 1987; Infante, Trebing, Shepherd & Seeds, 1984; Infante & Wigley, 1986). One of the earliest definitions of aggression by Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, and Sears (1939) suggests that it is “any sequence of behavior, the goal response to which is the injury of the person toward whom it is directed” (p. 9). Another scholar to provide an early understanding of what aggression is, was provided by Konrad Lorenz, an ethologist who studied animal behavior under natural conditions. Within the introductory pages of Lorenz’s (1966) book titled: On Aggression, he states that aggression is “the fighting instinct in beast and man which is directed at members of the same species” (p. ix).

Infante (1987) provided a contemporary understanding of what constitutes verbally aggressive behavior:

An interpersonal behavior may be considered aggressive if it applies force physically and/or symbolically in order, minimally, to dominate and perhaps damage or, maximally, to defeat and perhaps destroy the locus of attack. The locus of attack in interpersonal communication can be a person’s body, material possessions, self-concept, and position on topics of communication, or [an individual’s] behavior (p. 158).

Infante (1987) acknowledged that his definition does not resolve all of the issues surrounding the general definition of verbal aggression seen at that time, but argued that it does provide us with a clear basis for developing further understanding of what can be
considered as aggression within an interpersonal communicative context. In providing the reader with a contemporary understanding, Infante (1987) splits aggression into two principle components, physical aggression and symbolic aggression. Infante (1986) defines physical aggression, as involving “one’s body or extensions of the body to apply force to another person in order minimally, to dominate and perhaps damage, or maximally, to defeat and perhaps destroy the locus of attack” (p. 3). This is a physical act that can include such actions as forcefully pushing or hitting someone.

The second principle component provided is symbolic aggression and is defined by Infante (1986) as involving the use of “messages in order, minimally, to dominate and perhaps damage, or maximally, to defeat and perhaps destroy another person’s position on topics of communication and/or the persons self-concept” (p. 4). This form of aggression uses words and/or nonverbal gestures intended to dominate or damage an individual’s self-concept or their position on the topic being discussed through the use of threats, character attacks, competence attacks, teasing, profanity, ridicule, verbal threats, and nonverbal gestures. An important component for both of these principles involves the locus of attack (where the attack is directed). The locus of attack can range from another person’s body, their possessions, their personal self-concept/character, or even the positions the individual(s) may hold on controversial issues.

In further understanding the duality of aggression, Infante (1986), suggests:

The types of symbolic aggression in interpersonal communication can be understood by identifying the aspects of the individual’s personality, which control symbolic aggression. The aggressiveness portion of personality may be viewed as a multidimensional structure of four traits: assertiveness, argumentativeness, hostility, and verbal aggressiveness (p. 4).
Infante (1987) proposed a model of aggressive communication that provides the framework for classifying forms of symbolic aggression. The personality traits that are considered to be constructive include assertiveness and argumentativeness (Infante & Rancer, 1996), and are associated with desirable behaviors in a healthy relationship (Infante, 1985; Onyekwere, Rubin & Infante, 1991; Rancer & Avtgis, 2006). The two constructive personality types have the ability to create satisfaction and enhanced interpersonal relationships.

The two personality traits that are considered to be destructive are verbal aggressiveness and hostility (Infante & Rancer, 1996; Infante & Wigley, 1986). These traits can lead to interpersonal dissatisfaction, relational deterioration, and affect relationships negatively (Infante & Wigley, 1986; Rancer & Avgtis, 2006; Segrin & Fitzpatrick, 1992). Thus it can be concluded that; “aggression can be good or bad, or both good and bad” (Infante & Rancer, 1996, p. 332).

Hostility and verbal aggressiveness are considered destructive because those who utilize them do so in order to hurt, embarrass and humiliate others. These destructive behaviors can be damaging and psychologically harmful in long lasting ways, and come in the form of verbal messages intended to damage the self-concept of the interactant(s) in order to make them feel less favorable about themselves (Infante & Wigley, 1986). The main focus of this study is concerned with the destructive form of symbolic aggression (i.e., verbal aggressiveness), and will be discussed in detail below.

Hostility is considered to be the more global of the two destructive traits (Infante & Rancer, 1996). Berkowitz (1998) describes hostility as “an attitude, a dislike of a particular person, object, or issue, accompanied by a desire to see this target injured or
even destroyed” (p. 264). Hostility is comprised of messages that express an individual’s feeling of irritability, negativity, resentment, and suspicion (Infante & Rancer, 1996). Irritability is mostly seen in individuals who have quick tempers, little patience and those who tend to be “moody” and become angry if or when things go wrong (Infante et al., 2003). The second type of message, negativity, is communicated with excessive pessimism concerning outcomes that others may be more favorable about. Individuals who utilize negativity, tend to be uncooperative in nature, and are antagonistic towards authority, rules, and accepted social conventions shared by others (Infante et al., 2003). Resentment, the third type of message, is the expressing of jealousy, hate, and the threat of insult that may or may not be real or imagined, creating anger in the individual (Infante et al., 2003). The final type of message is suspicion. This type of hostile message is communicated through messages concerning distrust in others and the thought that others want and plan to harm them (either physically or symbolically) (Infante et al., 2003). It is suggested by Rancer & Avtgis (2006) that hostility can be understood as a predisposition and that these individuals are considered to have a hostile personality.

The second destructive trait is verbal aggressiveness. Verbal aggressiveness may be considered a subset of hostility, because, “all verbal aggressiveness is hostile, but not all hostility involves attacking the self-concepts of other people” (Infante, 1986, p. 5). Being verbally aggressive involves an individual’s tendencies to attack the self-concepts of an interactant or a group of interactants instead of, or in addition too, their position on topics of discussion (Infante & Rancer, 1996). There are several types of verbally aggressive messages that have been identified by the model of verbal aggressiveness. They include: aggressive messages attacking an individual(s) character, competence,
their background, the individual(s) physical appearance, messages of ridicule, threats, the use of profanity, maledictions (“curses” or “jinxes”), teasing, and nonverbal emblems (i.e., displaying insulting gestures with the hands and/or body) (Infante & Rancer, 1996).

*Causes of Verbally Aggressive Behavior*

Research has uncovered five reasons why an individual may use aggression, and includes; psychopathology, having disdain for the target, social learning, argumentative skill deficiency, and genetics (Infante et al., 1984; Infante & Rancer, 1996; Rancer & Avtgis, 2006; Wigley, 1998). Although these five reasons have been identified as being five potential causes of verbally aggressive behavior, there is substantial evidence indicating the two main causes of verbal aggressiveness results from social learning and an argumentative skill deficiency (Wigley, 1998)

Psychopathology (repressed hostility) occurs when an individual expresses hostility that they have been previously repressing (Rancer & Avtgis, 2006; Wigley, 1998), this is also referred to as transference (Infante et al., 1984). Transference can be understood as an unconscious behavior, where the individual repressing the hostile feelings transfers those feelings from the original individual, or individuals, that initially created them, towards an individual or group of individuals who remind them of the original perpetrator(s) that targeted them in a hostile way. For example, if an individual was deeply hurt by someone or a group of individuals who teased, threatened, and/or ridiculed him/her as a child, and if this individual was forced to hold in (repress) their negative feelings, because of age, or a lower professional/social status than the individual(s) targeting them with the aggression, and if several years later, when the target encounters an individual(s) who reminds them of the perpetrator(s) that caused the
hurt and embarrassment earlier in life, the target will act out in a hostile and verbally aggressive manner. They transfer the hurt feelings they felt or currently feel towards the individual or group that reminds them of the individual(s) who teased, threatened, and/or ridiculed him/her as a child and caused so much pain early in their life.

Disdain is characterized as an individual’s severe dislike, or in some cases even hatred, towards another individual or group of individuals (Infante et al., 1984). Disdain “helps us understand why some people are consistently verbally aggressive toward some individuals, but not towards others” (Wigley, 1998, p. 194). Rancer and Avtgis (2006) suggest that disdain may not be as powerful of a cause for verbally aggressive behavior as some of the other causes. If we have disdain (dislike, disapproval, or disrespect) for someone, we typically and naturally avoid interacting with that specific individual or group of individuals. Just as Albert Mehrabian (1971) suggests in his book Silent Messages, “People are drawn towards persons and things they like, evaluate highly, and prefer; and they avoid or move away from things they dislike, evaluate negatively, and do not prefer” (p. 1).

The social learning explanation for verbally aggressive behavior suggests that we learn to be verbally aggressive from others whom we interact with and/or observe on a regular basis (Rancer & Avtgis, 2006). The social learning explanation is considered one of the two main reasons why an individual would target another for verbal aggression (Wigley, 1998). This explanation directly coincides with social learning theory, and suggests that we learn to behave in a particular way based on certain social situations that reward us for acting in a specific manner (Infante et al., 1984; Rancer & Avtgis, 2006).
For example, if people laugh when someone is teased, threatened, or ridiculed, this laughter can act as a positive reinforcement for the negative behavior.

Argumentative skill deficiency, according to Wigley (1998) is the second of the two main reasons why an individual would target another for verbally aggressive behavior. Those with an argumentative skill deficiency do not know how to argue skillfully and as a result become frustrated and resort to attacking the self-concepts and character of the target(s) involved in the argument (Infante, Rancer & Avtgis, 2010; Rancer & Avtgis, 2006). When an individual is placed in an argument situation, their mind goes into an attack-and-defend mode. The reason why an individual with an argumentative skill deficiency becomes easily frustrated is because when he/she are placed in an argument situation they run out of things to say (i.e., arguments), during the argument (Rancer & Avgtis, 2006).

The final potential cause of verbally aggressive behavior is contingent upon genetics, or what is called the inherited trait explanation. This explanation suggests that individuals who are high in verbal aggression are born with a biologically predetermined temperament that causes them to be more prone to using verbal aggression than others, and this biological temperament is argued to remain consistent throughout their lives (Beatty & McCroskey, 1997).

A clear understanding needs to be made concerning the differences between being argumentative and being verbally aggressive. As suggested by Rancer & Avtgis (2006), “when the attack is [directed at] the other person’s position, it is considered an argumentative attack, when the attack is on the other person’s self-concept, it is considered a verbally aggressive attack” (p. 21).
When taken together, the four traits outlined within these sections including; assertiveness, argumentativeness, verbal aggressiveness, and hostility, suggest four distinct types of symbolic aggression.

Thus, the aggressive personality can take numerous forms. For instance, a person may be low in assertiveness, like to argue and use verbal aggression, but be otherwise low in hostility. Another pattern would be a person who is assertive, but low in the other three traits; still another would be the individual who is assertive and argumentative but not hostile or verbally aggressive (Infante, 1986, pp. 5-6).

Aggression Within the Workplace

The main focus of this study is to examine verbal aggression within an organizational context. According to the Employment Law Alliance nearly half of American workers have reported either experiencing firsthand or having learned about organizational superiors engaging in aggression such as yelling, ignoring, insulting, interrupting, or criticizing their subordinates (Avtgis & Chory, 2010).

Aggression in the workplace has many potential deleterious and destructive consequences, such as an increased likelihood of leading to additional more intense, serious, and harmful aggressive episodes, including physical violence (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Coombs & Holladay, 2004; Grandey, Dickter, & Sin, 2004; Johnson & Indvik, 2001). Potentially most detrimental and deleterious is the high toll on the human resources of the organization itself (Dillon, 2012). Aggression in the workplace can lead to a variety of negative physical and emotional effects on victims who have either experienced being the target in the past or who are currently becoming victimized by aggression in the workplace. Targets and victims of verbal abuse within the workplace experience declines in physical health (Coombs & Holladay, 2004; Johnson & Indvik, 2001; LeBlanc & Kelloway, 2002; Spector, Coulter, Stockwell & Matz, 2007), mental
health (Coombs & Holladay, 2004), and emotional well-being (LeBlanc & Kelloway, 2002). It has also been reported that targets and victims of verbal abuse within the workplace experienced increased stress (Glomb, 2002; Grandey, et al., 2004), anxiety, depression (Johnson & Indvik, 2001; Spector et al. 2007), emotional exhaustion, and burnout (Avtgis & Rancer, 2008; Grandey, et al., 2004). The negative emotional and mental implications have been reported as resulting from the individual worrying about the aggressive incident or future encounters with the aggressor, including attempts to avoid him/her (Pearson, Andersson & Porath, 2000).

The effects of workplace aggression can surpass that of the aggressor and the target and can have negative implications for the organization as a whole. Some of the organizational implications concerning workplace aggression includes decreases in job performance by the victim (Glomb, 2002), disengagement from work and extra-organizational activities and decreased work effort (Glomb, 2002; Pearson, et al., 2000), which may ultimately lead to more time off from work by the target/victim (Glomb, 2002; Grandey, et al., 2004; Pearson, et al., 2000). In line with this, employees who have reported experiencing aggressive incidents also report lower levels of organizational commitment (Johnson & Indvik, 2001; LeBlanc & Kelloway, 2002; Pearson, et al., 2000) and job satisfaction (Glomb, 2002; Lapierre, Spector & Leck, 2005). Verbally abusive behaviors within the organizational context have also been shown to be associated with turnover (Grandey, et al., 2004; Pearson, et al., 2000), theft (Pearson, et al., 2000), and lawsuits (Coombs & Holladay, 2004; Johnson & Indvik, 2001).
Aggressive organizational communication has deleterious effects for all parties and institutions involved; thus, the occurrence of aggressive communication should be considered an aversive condition that should be reduced, if not eliminated from the contemporary workplace (Avtgis & Chory, 2010, p. 291)

Verbally aggressive communicative behavior is detrimental to both individuals and organizations as a whole, and some individuals are prone to being more verbally aggressive than others, specifically those who are predisposed to verbal aggression (i.e. personality traits). With this in mind Avtgis and Chory (2010) asked the following question: “what can be done to minimize exposure to and incidents of verbal aggression?” (p. 296) The answer to this question may be that there is no way to minimize exposure and incidents of verbal aggression in the workplace. However, according to Avtgis and Chory (2010) previous research has suggested that training programs could be a possible means of addressing these negative and destructive behaviors (e.g., Glomb, Steel & Arvey, 2002; Nussbaum, 1984; Richmond & McCroskey, 2004; Schat & Kelloway, 2005) and there is evidence of its effectiveness (e.g., Burroughs, 2007; Schat & Kelloway, 2003). One method of training individuals who have personality traits that predispose them to being verbally aggressive is not in training them on what to say, but training these individuals on how they say it in order to improve upon their communicator style.

**Communicator Style**

Norton (1978) defined communicator style as “the way one verbally and paraverbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered, or understood” (p. 99). Norton (1978) continues by conceptualizing communicator style as,
animated, dramatic, friendly, attentive, contentious, dominant, impression leaving, communicator image, open, and relaxed.

The animated and dramatic communicator styles are both characterized as “high-energy-expending behaviors… [and] both styles serve to exaggerate or color communication content” (Montgomery & Norton, 1981, p. 126). The animated communicator uses positive eye contact, many facial expressions and gestures often (Norton, 1978, 1983). A manager characterized as being animated would be reported as using facial expressions, as being very expressive nonverbally, and as someone who constantly gestures with his/her hands and body while communicating. Employees would say that it is generally easy to know the manager’s emotional state, even if he/she does not say anything (Norton, 1978).

The dramatic communicator “manipulates exaggerations, fantasies, stories, metaphors, rhythm, voice, and other stylistic devices to highlight or understate content” (Norton, 1978, p. 99). The manager who is dramatic would be characterized as being a high-energy and active communicator. They would be reported as someone who uses speech that is very picturesque, as someone who frequently verbally exaggerates to emphasize a point, regularly tells jokes, anecdotes, and stories when communicating, and as someone who physically and vocally acts out what they want to communicate (Norton, 1978, 1983).

According to Norton (1978, 1983) the friendly and attentive cluster reflects elements of social sensitivity. A communicator who is friendly and attentive generally makes sure that the individual(s) communicating to them know that he/she is listening and understands the messages they are communicating (Norton, 1978). Within a
workplace context, a manager who is friendly-attentive would use nonverbal and verbal behaviors to acknowledge that he/she is listening and understands what is being communicated to them. This manager would use nonverbal behaviors such as smiling, nodding, posture, eye gaze, and would sometimes repeat back what the employee has said in a way that lets the employee know that the manager has heard and understands the message(s) being communicated to them (Norton, 1978).

A manager who is contentious is associated with displaying aggressive behaviors such as being assertive and argumentative (Norton, 1978). A manager who is contentious would be characterized as being strong, assertive, and self-confident. Managers who score high on the contentious dimension tend to get wound up in a heated discussion and have a hard time stopping themselves, very often insist that others document or present some form of proof for what they are arguing, and are very quick to challenge individuals who disagree with them (Norton, 1978, 1983).

The dominant communicator tends to take charge of social situations (Norton, 1978). The dominant manager would be someone who speaks strongly and very frequently in most social situations, typically dominate informal conversations, and tend to take charge of things when they are with others (Norton, 1978, 1983).

“Impression leaving is related to the impact a communicator has upon those with whom he/she interacts” (Montgomery & Norton, 1981, p. 126). Within a workplace setting, a manager who would be reported as having a high level of impression leaving is someone who leaves employees with a lasting memory of the communicative interaction, the manager him/herself, or a combination of both.
The communicator image dimension has to do with the general assessment of the overall effectiveness of a person’s communication style (Montgomery & Norton, 1981). A manager who is reported as being high in communicator image would be characterized as typically finding it easy to interact with others including: friends, acquaintances, intimates and strangers. A manager who scores high on the communicator image dimension would find it extremely easy to maintain a conversation with a member of the opposite sex with whom they have just met, is a very good communicator in a small group of strangers, and finds it generally very easy to communicate with strangers on a one-to-one basis (Norton, 1978, 1983).

The open communicator style “signals that the content of a message is representational of a communicator’s actual feelings, beliefs, and opinions” (Montgomery & Norton, 1981, p. 125), and makes the private self more public (Norton, 1978). A manager who is high in the open communicator style construct would be reported as using facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, posture, vocal cues, word choices, and riskiness of content and context variables (Montgomery & Norton, 1981). This manager would readily reveal personal things about him/herself to employees, would be extremely open as a communicator, openly express his/her feelings or emotions, and even if it is painful for the employee, the manager would rather be open and honest than closed and dishonest (Norton, 1978, 1983).

The last communicator style to be covered is the relaxed communicator style. Individuals who rate high on the relaxed communicator style dimension are characterized as being calm and collected, and relatively free from nervousness/anxiety in his/her communication, even when under pressure. A manager who scores high on the relaxed
dimension would be characterized as a relaxed speaker, has a rhythm or flow to his/her speech that is not affected by apparent nervousness, and is seen overall as relaxed when communicating (Norton, 1978, 1983).

**Affirming Communicator Style**

Two styles specifically to come from Norton’s (1978) definition and conceptualization of the communicator style construct are that of the affirming/nonaffirming communicator styles. In being affirming the communicator is highly relaxed, attentive, and friendly (Infante & Gorden, 1989). Someone who is a highly relaxed, attentive, and friendly communicator could be seen using nonverbal immediacy behaviors, such as: smiling, nodding, positive use of posture, eye gaze, as someone who is relatively free from nervousness and anxiety (Montgomery & Norton, 1981), and who does not become hostile/aggressive when communicating (Norton, 1978). For example, if an affirming communicator were in an argumentative conversation, the individual would be perceived as supporting, rather than attacking the other person’s self-concept (Infante, Rancer & Jordan, 1996). It should be noted here that, considering the situation to be one of an argumentative conversation, the individual would be attacking the topic concerning the conversation, but as noted above, he/she would be conscious not to attack the conversation partner’s self-concept and/or character. Thus, it may be said that an affirming communicator is someone who is careful not to attack the self concept, character, or competence of the individual he/she is communicating with (low in verbal aggression), and as someone who uses nonverbal immediacy behaviors such as positive eye contact/gazing behaviors, positive facial
expressions (such as smiling) positive head nods, and who has a relaxed body position when communicating.

The affirming communicator style moderates perceptions of aggressive behavior so as to create, or yield, more positive than negative perceptions/outcomes (Infante, Anderson, Martin, Herington & Kim, 1993; Infante & Gorden, 1987, 1989, & 1991). A line of research by Infante, Rancer & Jordan (1996), Rancer, Jordan-Jackson & Infante, (2003), and Jordan-Jackson, Lin, Rancer & Infante (2008) found that when a communicator within a conflict situation uses an affirming communicating style, the individual is perceived as being more attentive, friendly, and relaxed as compared to when the individual communicates with a nonaffirming communicator style. The nonaffirming communicator style is conceptualized as being dominant, contentious (argumentative), and using a precise style; the precise style is characterized by an individual who is concerned with accuracy, documentation, and proof in information and argument (Montgomery & Norton, 1981).

Infante et al. (1996) studied affirming and nonaffirming communicator style and dyad sex in an attempt to determine whether or not these factors influence participants’ perceptions of verbal aggression and argumentative behavior in an interpersonal dispute. The authors identify factors that influence perceptions of verbal aggression in high conflict situations, and discuss a series of studies that provide evidence that when an affirming communicator style is paired with being high in trait argumentativeness and low in trait verbal aggressiveness the end result enhances perceptions of the communicator.
Infante and Gorden (1989) discovered that superiors were more likely to evaluate subordinates favorably who were high in argumentativeness and communicated with an affirming communicator style. Furthermore superiors who were reported as being high in trait argumentativeness and used an affirming communicator style were perceived by subordinates as having greater upward organizational effectiveness (Infante & Gorden, 1987), and subordinates reported greater levels of satisfaction, including higher levels of organizational commitment (Infante & Gorden, 1991). Furthermore, Infante and Gorden (1989) reported finding research by Infante et al. (1993) that found evidence suggesting that when superiors were reported as being low in argumentativeness, high in verbal aggressiveness, and used a nonaffirming communicator style, they were perceived as being more willing to use negative compliance gaining strategies. From this research Infante et al. (1996) suggested that A conflict episode characterized by verbally aggressive messages delivered with an affirming communicator style may be perceived as a less destructive encounter than the same episode containing verbal aggression delivered with a nonaffirming communicator style, because it may be considered a positive expectancy violation (p. 319).

In addition to affirming/nonaffirming communicator style, the study also investigated the influence sex played in affecting perceptions of verbal aggression and argumentative behavior within an interpersonal dispute. In their investigation of sex and perceptions of aggressive communication behavior, Infante et al. (1996) found evidence to support that on average, males score higher than females on self-reports of both argumentativeness (Infante, 1982, 1985) and verbal aggressiveness (Infante & Wigley, 1986; Whaley, 1982). From this literature Infante, et al. (1996) predicted two hypotheses; “When an affirming style is used, fewer comments will be mistaken for verbally
aggressive messages” (p. 321). The second hypothesis predicted that when compared to female dyads, observers of male dyads in an interpersonal dispute will “be more likely to overestimate the number of verbally aggressive messages used, will be more likely to perceive verbally aggressive conduct overall; and will be more likely to perceive argumentative conduct overall” (p. 321).

In order to test the two hypotheses, Infante et al. (1996), created scripts of an interpersonal conflict between two roommates, where one roommate informs the other that his/her family would be visiting the roommates for a homecoming weekend. A discussion regarding rules that should be implemented for such visits ensued between the roommates. The scripts were written in a way so that the conflict between the two roommates rose, climaxed, and then ended in de-escalation/resolution. Four conditions were created utilizing the original transcription of the script. “Conversation A was between two male roommates – John and Sam – who used affirming messages” (p. 323). “Conversation B was between two males – John and Sam – who used nonaffirming messages” (p. 324). “Conversations C and D were identical to Conversations A and B, respectively, except the roommates were females – Judy and Sharon” (p. 324). Prior to a pre-test manipulation check, a pilot study was conducted, and Infante et al. (1996) empirically identified affirming nonverbal behaviors (i.e. eye gaze/contact, calm/steady voice, inclusive posture, direct body orientation, etc.) as well as nonaffirming nonverbal behaviors (i.e. staring/glaring, non-playful hitting, scowling, grimacing facial expressions, intimidating body posture, etc.).

In order to assess communicator style, 44 students who were not part of the participant pool for the main study were used for a pre-study manipulation check in order
to determine participants’ perceptions of the affirming/nonaffirming behaviors exhibited by the roommates within the script. Students were asked to respond to seven semantic differential type scales, that included: kind/cruel, nonaffirming/affirming, pleasant/unpleasant, awful/nice, aggressive/meek, gentle/harsh, and tense/relaxed (p. 324). After the manipulation check was completed and deemed successful, Infante et al. (1996) moved forward with the main experiment.

Participants involved in the final analysis were 189 students. Results indicated support for both hypothesis one and two. As predicted by Infante et al. (1996), their findings revealed a significant main effect for affirming/nonaffirming style, supporting the first hypothesis. When affirming messages were used within the dispute between the roommates, participants perceived the communication as being significantly more relaxed, friendly, and attentive than when nonaffirming messages were used. The second hypothesis predicted by Infante et al (1996) focused on the gender of the roommates in the interpersonal conflict depicted in the dyad. Their findings revealed a significant main effect for gender. These results indicated that participants overestimated the verbally aggressive and argumentative conduct in the male dyad in comparison to how the female dyads were perceived. However, further analysis indicated that when analyzed separately the verbally aggressive and argumentative conduct in both the male and female dyads were overestimated.

Within the discussion section, Infante et al. (1996) discusses how the study effectively used scripts as the method of conveying affirming and nonaffirming messages. However, the authors suggest that since participants overestimated the verbally aggressive and argumentative conduct within both the male/female dyads, that hearing
and seeing the messages in live/naturalistic interactions may provide a more “accurate” estimation by participants of the amount of verbally aggressive messages within the dyads. Thus, this thesis will utilize video recordings of two semi-professional actors in order to investigate whether a manager’s use of verbally aggressive messages and nonverbal immediacy influences an observer’s perception of that manager’s overall source credibility, and the relaxed, friendly, and attentive dimensions of the communicator style construct.

According to Rancer et al. (2003), a great amount of research involving the assessing of communicative behaviors/situations have utilized written accounts/scenarios, video recordings, photographs, audio recordings, participants observing live performances, participants enacting situations which they later assess, and participants being asked to recall particular situations from previous experiences. Among this list, the authors write that written accounts, video recordings, participation ratings, and participation recall have been among the most used methods utilized by researchers. In light of this, Rancer et al. (2003) sought to investigate whether the method of presenting stimuli to subjects (written transcript vs. videotape) influences those participants’ perceptions of a conflict situation. Within their article, Rancer et al. (2003) writes that the 2003 study, being discussed now, was prompted by a previous study (discussed above) by Infante et al. (1996).

Rancer et al. (2003) discuss within their article that although the two hypotheses in the Infante et al. (1996) study were supported, participants greatly overestimated “the occurrence of verbal aggression in the conversation” (Infante et al., 1996, p. 327). One explanation provided by Rancer et al. (2003) for the overestimation concerned
participants not receiving enough information through the use of transcripts in order to make an accurate assessment of the verbally aggressive and argumentative behavior within the interpersonal dispute scenario used in the study. Thus, the purpose of the Rancer et al. (2003) study was to “determine if mode of presentation alters the perceptions of communication in a conflict situation” (p. 37).

With this considered, Rancer et al. (2003) asked the following research question:

Will video and transcript presentations of affirming and nonaffirming styles in an interpersonal dispute differ in terms of: a) the estimation of verbally aggressive messages?, b) the perception of argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness of the participants?, c) the difficulty to assess the communication that took place in the conversation?, d) the favorability ratings of the dispute behaviors as seen by observers?, e) the observers’ attitudes toward how the dispute is resolved? (p. 37).

A script was created in order to answer the research question, and was adapted from the one created by Infante et al. (1996). The script was of an interpersonal conflict between two roommates (John & Sam), where one roommate informs the other that his family would be visiting for a homecoming weekend. A discussion between the roommates regarding rules that should be implemented for such visits ensued, and just as in the Infante et al. (1996) script, the scripts were written in a way so that the conflict between the two roommates rose, climaxed, and then ended in a de-escalation/resolution. Rancer et al. (2003) developed two versions of the transcript, one version that contained affirming nonverbal behaviors, and a second version, containing nonaffirming nonverbal behaviors. This was based on previous research by Infante et al. (1996), who in a pilot study, empirically identified affirming nonverbal behaviors (i.e. eye gaze/contact, calm/steady voice, inclusive posture, direct body orientation, etc.) as well as nonaffirming nonverbal behaviors (i.e. staring/glaring, non-playful hitting, scowling,
grimacing facial expressions, intimidating body posture, etc.). From the two scripts, two videotapes of the interpersonal conflict between the two roommates were created that followed the aforementioned scripts exactly.

The results of this study found that the way participants experienced the interpersonal conflict between the two roommates did not affect their “perceptions of argumentative and verbally aggressive conduct, estimation of the number of verbally aggressive messages, or how easy or difficult it was to assess communication in the dispute situation” (p. 43). The results did however indicate that “attitudes toward the resolution of the conflict and the favorability of the dispute behaviors” (p. 43), were affected by the way participants experienced the interpersonal conflict between the two roommates (Rancer et al., 2003).

In breaking these results down into a discussion format, the results indicated that within the transcript versus video condition the resolution was evaluated more positively in the transcript version. Results also indicated that the dispute behaviors within the transcript condition were perceived about the same degree as the video condition. Whether the participants read about the behaviors within the script, or viewed the same behaviors within videotape, they perceived those behaviors in the same way and to the same degree. The authors also found a significant main effect for the transcript-video condition concerning the four dependent variables, which included: participants’ estimation of verbal aggression, participants’ perceptions concerning the argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness within the conflict scenario, and the ease of assessing the communication that took place in the conversation. The authors conclude their discussion of the results by indicating that there was no significant main effect for
gender, and there was no interaction between participant’s gender and the other two independent variables; affirming/nonaffirming nonverbal behaviors in the dispute, and the use of transcript/videotape as the channel for presentation.

In a study by Jordan-Jackson et al. (2008), the authors further examined both communicator style and the sex of the communicative interactants within the conflict situation and utilized video stimulation as the mode for presenting the interpersonal dispute to participants. Specifically the study examined participants’ perceptions of argumentative and verbally aggressive conduct as well as five relationship-outcome factors that are contingent upon dyad sex/communicator style.

The authors found a number of studies supporting the notion that within a conflict situation where individuals physically face each other in order to deal with the conflict, the relationship between the individuals is influenced by their communication style and not solely based on what the individuals say (Burgoon & Dillman, 1995; Canary, Emmers-Sommer & Faulkner, 1997; Canary & Lackey, 2006).

In addition to communicator style, dyad sex was also examined. Jordan-Jackson et al. (2008) note that previous scholarship has found that men typically score higher than women on self reports of both argumentativeness (Infante, 1982; 1985) and verbal aggressiveness (Infante, Wall, Leap & Danielson, 1984; Infante & Wigley, 1986; Nicotera & Rancer, 1994; Whaley, 1982), while other studies, have found mixed results when comparing sex differences and aggressive behaviors (Eagly & Steffen, 1986).

Furthermore, Jordan-Jackson et al. (2008) examined five variables in this present study that were not included in the two previous studies by Infante et al. (1996), and Rancer et al. (2003). The five variables included: “1) relationship effect (the effect of the
conflict on the interpersonal relationship), 2) attitude toward the solution (to the conflict), 3) perceived expertise of the participants in the conflict, 4) perceived trustworthiness of the participants in the conflict, and 5) perceived appropriateness of the dyad’s communication behavior during the conflict” (Jordan-Jackson et al., 2008, p. 245).

In light of the inconclusive results of previous attempts to better understand sex differences and communication, specifically in the comparing of argumentativeness and verbal aggression between sexes, including their effects on relational outcomes, Jordan-Jackson et al. (2008) proposed the following two research questions: “Do perceptions of argumentative and verbally aggressive conduct and the five relationship-outcome factors differ depending on whether the dyad in an interpersonal dispute is comprised of males or females?” (p. 246). The second research question investigated was: “Do affirming versus nonaffirming communicator styles impact perceptions of argumentative and verbally aggressive conduct and the five relationship-outcome factors?” (p. 246).

The script used in the creation of each of the videos for the Jordan-Jackson et al. (2008) study was identical to the script used in the Rancer et al. (2003) study. The script consisted of an interpersonal conflict between two college roommates (two male/two female) where one roommate informs the other that his/her family would be visiting for a homecoming weekend. A discussion between the roommates regarding rules that should be implemented for such visits ensued, and just as in the original script by Infante et al. (1996) and by Rancer et al. (2003), a conflict between the two roommates rose, climaxed, and then ended in a de-escalation/resolution. The two scripts used in the Jordan-Jackson et al. (2008) study were identical to the script used in the Rancer et al. (2003) study with the addition of affirming/nonaffirming conditions for this study; this was based on
previous research conducted by Infante et al. (1996), and Rancer et al. (2003) that identified affirming nonverbal behaviors (i.e. eye gaze/contact, calm/steady voice, inclusive posture, direct body orientation, etc.) as well as nonaffirming nonverbal behaviors (i.e. staring/glaring, non-playful hitting, scowling, grimacing facial expressions, intimidating body posture, etc.).

After the videotapes were created from the aforementioned scripts, participants were assigned to view one of the four conditions (male dyad—affirming nonverbal; male dyad—nonaffirming nonverbal; female dyad—affirming nonverbal; female dyad—nonaffirming nonverbal). The primary interest of the Jordan-Jackson et al. (2008) study was stated in two research questions; listed above. Results indicated that the combined dependent variables (perceptions of argumentative conduct, perceptions of verbally aggressive conduct, perceptions of relational effect, attitude toward the solution, perceptions of expertise, perceptions of trustworthiness, and perceptions of appropriateness of behavior) were significantly influenced by the two combined independent variables (dyad sex/communicator style). The results further indicated a modest association between dyad-sex and the combined aforementioned dependent variables; results also indicated the same modest association between communicator style and the combined aforementioned dependent variables.

Further examination of the main effects of dyad sex on the individual dependent variables indicated that the male dyad was perceived as being more argumentative but less verbally aggressive than the female dyad; relational effects concerning the dispute was perceived as being more positive within the male dyad than the female dyad; perceived expertise in managing the dispute was perceived high in the male dyad
compared to the female dyad; and the behavior within the male dyad was perceived as being more appropriate than the female dyad. After further reviewing the results of the data analysis, the authors also found that overall, an affirming communicator style will be perceived as being less verbally aggressive than a nonaffirming communicator style.

Much like the research outlined within this section, by Infante et al. (1996), Rancer et al. (2003), and Jordan-Jackson et al. (2008), this thesis will seek to better understand how both a positive communicative behavior that has been researched and found to create positive relational outcomes (nonverbal immediacy), and a communicative behavior that has been studied and found to have deleterious effects on relational outcomes (verbal aggression) influences perceptions within a workplace setting. In particularly, the purpose of this study will be to better understand the positive role nonverbal immediacy plays, and the destructive, deleterious effects verbal aggression yields within a workplace setting.

**Immediacy**

Immediacy behaviors are among the most widely studied constructs within communication research (Santilli, Miller & Katt, 2011), and few scholars can deny the basic and fundamental importance that immediacy behaviors hold in not only developing satisfying relationships, but also in the maintaining of those relationships as well (Wang & Schrodt, 2010). Our understanding of what immediacy is, as well as, what communicative behaviors it involves, has evolved from the work of Albert Mehrabian. His earliest work investigated verbal (linguistic) immediacy, with his later work concentrated more on nonverbal immediacy behaviors (Mehrabian, 1966, 1971; Richmond, McCroskey & Johnson, 2003). Immediacy behaviors have been defined as
communicative behaviors that have the ability to create feelings of psychological closeness between interactants, and as a direct result, the ability to reduce both the psychological and physical distance between said interactants (Andersen, 1979; Exline & Winters, 1965; Mehrabian, 1971; Witt & Wheeless, 2001). From his work, Albert Mehrabian (1966) found that observers judge less immediate forms of linguistic messages as indicating relatively more negative communicator evaluation than those judged as exhibiting more immediate forms of linguistic messages. Mehrabian (1966) explains that his findings demonstrate that there is a certain degree of agreement in the use of different types of immediacy concerning the communicating of attitudes.

The behavioral concept of Immediacy is grounded in approach-avoidance theory. Taken from the field of environmental psychology, approach-avoidance theory examines the various environmental stimuli or conditions that influence an individual’s approach and avoidance behaviors (Clark, Ezell, Clark & Sheffield, 2009). Simply put, individuals will approach environments/situations they find more “pleasant” and avoid environments/situations they find to be unpleasant (Russel & Mehrabian, 1978). In line with this, Albert Mehrabian suggested that, “people are drawn towards persons and things they like, evaluate highly, and prefer; and [will] avoid or move away from things they dislike, evaluate negatively, and do not prefer” (Mehrabian, 1971, p. 1). For example, when discussing a topic or communicating with an individual whom we see as appealing, we tend to: animate our arms and use differing physical gestures in order to convey our thoughts, utilize direct eye contact, stand close to the individual(s), and actively engage in the conversation. When communicating with an individual whom we see as unappealing,
we tend to stand with our arms crossed, make little eye contact, stand farther away, and say very little.

Immediacy behaviors involve an increase in the sensory stimulation between two persons. When we stand close to someone or talk to [them], a great deal more stimulation and information [is] exchanged than if we were to stand farther away or remain silent (Mehrabian, 1971, pp. 3-4).

**Verbal Immediacy**

Immediacy can be divided into two differing types of communication behavior: verbal and nonverbal (Christophel, 1990; Gorham, 1988; Mehrabian, 1981). According to Gorham (1988) verbal immediacy consists of linguistic acts comprised of “stylistic differences in expression from which like and dislike [can be] inferred” (p. 42). It is the way we use words and language in order to communicate interest and liking. Verbal immediacy can include behaviors such as: the use of humor, praise, self-disclosure (use of personal examples/experiences), the frequency of initiating and/or willingness to engage in conversation concerning topics you know the other interactant(s) will find enjoyable to discuss, as well as asking of questions pertaining to the topic in order to solicit viewpoints or opinions from the interactant, asking follow up questions, referring to the interactant by name, and sentiments of inclusiveness through the use of words like “we” and “our” instead of words like “I” and “you.”

**Nonverbal Immediacy**

Andersen, Andersen, and Jensen (1979) originally compiled a list of nonverbal behaviors that had been studied and shown to comprise the nonverbal immediacy construct. Later, Richmond, et al. (2003) utilized these behaviors in designing the nonverbal immediacy scale that is currently used by contemporary communication scholars. The behaviors associated with nonverbal immediacy refer to various
communicative behaviors/cues that are used by the communicator to enhance closeness and to subsequently reduce physical and psychological distance between the communicator and the interactant (Jones & Wirtz, 2007; Mehrabian, 1967; Park, Lee, Yun & Kim, 2009; Zhang, 2006). Nonverbal immediacy cues include the following behaviors and will be discussed in detail below: the reduction of proxemic distances, the use of touch, eye contact/gazing behaviors, positive facial expressions, positive head nods, increases in gestures, relaxed body position, purposeful body movements, orientation of the body and head, and vocal expressiveness (Andersen, et al., 1979).

…it is important to note the difference between the affective response labeled immediacy (a perceived feeling of interpersonal closeness) and immediacy cues (specific behaviors that often may lead to such a perception). Consistently distinguishing between these terms and phenomena can lead to clearer conceptual and pragmatic claims (Kerssen-Griep & Witt, 2012, p. 503).

Discussed below are the ten nonverbal immediacy cues or behaviors (listed above) that Andersen, et al. (1979) had found to be studied and shown to comprise the nonverbal immediacy construct.

The first nonverbal immediacy cue or behavior to be outlined is the reduction of proxemic distances (Argyle & Dean, 1965; Beier & Sternberg, 1977; Jourard & Friedman, 1970, Mehrabian, 1968, 1969, 1971; Sommer, 1967). This is the physical-spatial distance between the communicator and the interactant(s). This behavior involves moving/leaning closer or farther away from an individual in order to assist in the creating of a comfortable proximity between the communicator and the interactant(s) (Richmond et al., 2003). Andersen, et al. (1979), within their immediacy scale, articulate reduction of proximic distances as: “this person seems more distant from me than most other people”;

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“this person seemed less distant from me than most other people” (pp. 174 & 175).

Within the contemporary scale designed by Richmond, et al. (2003), proximate distance is articulated in the following way: “this person moves away from others when they are touched while talking”; “this person sits close to or stands close to people while talking with them”; “this person moves closer to people when they are talking to them”; “this person leans towards people when they are talking to them”; “this person leans away from people when they are talking to them”; “this person tries not to sit or stand close to people when he/she talks with them” (p. 509). In the context of this study, and for example, this could involve the manager either standing closer or farther away from the employee(s), or in the case of a meeting at a desk or a table, sitting closer or farther away or leaning closer to or farther away from the communicative interactant in order to create a proxemic distance that is both comfortable for the manager and the employee(s) that are at the meeting.

The use of touch (Andersen & Leibowitz, 1978; Beier & Sternberg, 1977; Jourard & Friedman, 1970; Mehrabian, 1971) is the next nonverbal behavior outlined by Andersen, et al. (1979). Touching behaviors are considered to be a basic and important form of human interaction by Andersen and Leibowitz (1978). This component of nonverbal immediacy involves such behaviors as the touching of the interactant(s) on the shoulder or arm while talking (Richmond et al., 2003). Within their immediacy scale, Andersen, et al. (1979) articulate this nonverbal cue as: “this person touches me less than most other people usually do”; “this person touches me more than most other people” (p.174). Richmond, et al. (2003) articulate the use of touch as: “this person touches others on the shoulder or arm while talking to them”; “this person avoids touching people when
he/she talks to them” (p. 509). A positive example of touching behavior, that may be seen in a workplace setting, could be seeing a manager pat an employee on the upper back, or shoulder, or seeing the manager give a light nudge from his/her elbow into the employee’s arm.

Eye contact or gazing behaviors as a form of nonverbal immediacy (Argyle & Dean, 1965; Beier & Sternberg, 1977; Coutts & Schneider, 1976; Exline, 1963; Goldberg, Kiesler & Collins, 1969; Kendon, 1967; Mehrabian, 1968) involve the use of making eye contact with the person being interacted with or the object of interest concerning the communicative interaction (Richmond et al., 2003). The way Andersen, et al. (1979) articulate this within their immediacy scale is: “this person engages in more eye contact with me than most other people”; this person engages in less eye contact with me than most other people”. (p. 174). Within the immediacy scale developed by Richmond, et al. (2003), the use of positive eye contact and gazing behaviors is articulated as: “this person looks over or away from others while talking to them”; this person avoids eye contact while talking to people”; this person looks directly at people while talking to them”; “this person maintains eye contact with people when he/she talks to them” (p. 509). Within a workplace setting this could involve either the manager looking an employee in the eye as they are talking to the employee in question, or seeing the manager concentrate his/her gaze on a document or object the employee is showing them.

Another form of nonverbal immediacy outlined by Andersen, et al. (1979) consists of positive facial expressions, primarily smiling behaviors (Beier & Sternberg, 1977; Rosenfeld, 1966b). These nonverbal behaviors are particularly important since
facial movements are more frequently observed during communicating than body movements. As a result, facial cues have the ability to provide more information about emotions than body movements. These behaviors include the utilization of smiling as a sign of approval as well as a way of attempting to induce approving responses within the interactant(s) (Rosenfeld, 1966b). Andersen, et al. (1979) articulate this immediacy cue as: “this person smiles more than most other people”; “this person smiles less than most other people” (pp. 174 & 175). Within the contemporary scale designed by Richmond, et al. (2003), the use of facial expressions is articulated in the following way: “this person frowns while talking to people”; “this person has a bland facial expression when he/she talks to people”; “this person smiles when he/she talks to people” (p. 509). Within our workplace example, this could be as easy as seeing a manager smile as he/she is passing an employee in the hall. Or if an employee says hi to a manager in passing, he/she (the manager) smiles and says hello in response.

The fifth nonverbal immediacy behavior to be covered involves positive head nods (Rosenfeld, 1966a, 1966b). Rosenfeld (1966a) defines positive head nods as, the “distinct bidirectional movement of the head on the vertical plane, or a continuous sequence of such movements” (p.67) in order to acknowledge approval to the interactant(s). Andersen, et al. (1979) did not include a “positive head nod” dimension within their immediacy scale because the items related to this immediacy cue did not load through a principal components factor analysis. Similarly, Richmond, et al. (2003) did not add a positive head nod dimension into their contemporary immediacy scale. However, an example of this behavior could be in seeing a workplace manager using positive head nods to acknowledge that he/she understood the messages being
communicated to them by an employee, or by using positive head nods to nonverbally
acknowledge and/or approve a question posed by an employee.

Increases in gestures (Ekman, 1965a; Mehrabian & Williams, 1969; Rosenfeld,
1966a, 1966b) is the next form of nonverbal immediacy to be covered in this section, and
involves the animating of the body, through the use of the hands and arms, in order to
communicate nonverbally in combination with linguistically talking to the interactant(s)
(Richmond et al., 2003). Ekman (1965a), found evidence for suggesting that cues
(nonverbal gestures) from the lower body tend to indicate intensity of affect. Within the
workplace, this can be conceptualized as seeing a manager using his/her hands and arms
to give the conversation direction, meaning using his/her hands and arms to accentuate
linguistic messages. Within their immediacy scale, Andersen, et al. (1979) articulate this
nonverbal cue as: “this person gestures more than most other people”; “this person
gestures less than most other people” (pp. 174 & 175). Within the immediacy scale
developed by Richmond, et al. (2003), gestures are articulated in the following way: “this
person uses their hands and arms to gesture while talking to people”; “this person
gestures when he/she talks to people”; “this person is animated when he/she talks to
people”; “this person avoids gesturing while he/she is talking to people” (p. 509). An
example of these behaviors could be holding up a number of fingers in order to
nonverbally communicate a numerical value in combination with linguistically
verbalizing that same number. Another example could be seen in the manager using hand
gestures to explain how something mechanical works or how to put something
mechanical together. Yet another example could be seen in a manager giving an
employee direction on how to navigate through the organization, perhaps to another department through the use of hand gestures.

Relaxed body position (Mehrabian, 1968, 1970) as a form of nonverbal immediacy involves the use of a relaxed/comfortable body position, and the avoiding of a stiff/tense body position while communicating (Richmond et al., 2003). According to Mehrabian (1968), a tense posture can communicate a more negative attitude and a relaxed posture can communicate openness to communicate. The way Andersen, et al. (1979) articulate this within their immediacy scale is: “this person’s body is more tense than most other people”; “this person has a more relaxed body position than most other people” (p. 174). Richmond, et al. (2003) articulate relaxed body position as follows: “this person has a relaxed body position when he/she talks to people”; “this person has a tense body position whiling talking to people”; “this person is stiff when he/she talks to people” (p. 509). An example of this type of nonverbal immediacy could be seen in a manager sitting at his/her desk relaxed, open and ready to communicate to an employee.

The use of purposeful body movements (Ekman, 1965a) as a form of nonverbal immediacy has been shown to communicate affect (Ekman, 1965b), changes during an interaction consistent with verbal behavior (Ekman, 1964), changes in the quality of the interpersonal relationship between the individuals (Ekman, 1965b), and about whether the interactant(s) understand the communicator (Mahl, Danet & Norton, 1959). This involves purposefully using different body gestures that correspond with linguistic acts of communication. Andersen, et al. (1979) articulate this nonverbal behavior/cue in the following way: “this person engages in less movement than most other people”; “this person engages in more movement than most other people” (pp. 174 & 175). Richmond,
et al. (2003) did not add a purposeful body movement dimension into their contemporary immediacy scale. An example of this could be seen when a manager nods his/her head when also vocally saying yes to answer a question posed by an employee. Another positive example of purposeful body movements could be seen when an employee walks into his/her manager’s office and the manager raises his/her eye brows, smiles, extends his/her arms while verbally greeting the employee to come into his/her office.

The orientation of the body and head toward the interactant(s) (Beier & Sternberg, 1977; Mehrabian, 1968, 1969) as a form of nonverbal immediacy includes “the degree to which a communicator’s shoulders and legs are turned in the direction of, rather than away from, [the interactant(s)]” (Mehrabian, 1969, p. 366). This behavior can serve as an indicator of the communicator’s attitude and/or status (Mehrabian, 1969). The way Andersen, et al. (1979) articulate this within their immediacy scale is: “this person directs his/her body position more toward me than most other people usually do”; “this person directs his/her body position less toward me than most people usually do” (p. 174).

Richmond, et al. (2003) did not add a dimension concerning the orientation of the body and head into their contemporary immediacy scale. An example of this could include a manager turning his/her shoulders and legs toward an employee so as to indicate to the employee that they (the manager) are open and ready to communicate.

The last immediacy behavior to be covered is vocal expressiveness (Coats & Smidchens, 1966). This form of nonverbal immediacy consists of vocal change/variety, and the use of vocal animation within the conveying of a message. The opposite of immediate vocal expressiveness would be the use of a monotone/dull voice. This form of nonverbal immediacy is, not what is said, but how it is said. The way Andersen, et al.
(1979) articulate this within their immediacy scale is: “this person is more vocally expressive than most other people”; “this person is less vocally expressive than most other people” (pp. 174 & 175). Within the contemporary immediacy scale developed by Richmond, et al. (2003), the authors articulate vocal expressiveness as: “this person uses a monotone or dull voice while talking to people”; “this persons voice is monotonous or dull when he/she talks to people”; “ this person uses a variety of vocal expressions when he/she talks to people”; “this person has a lot of vocal variety when he/she talks to people” (p. 509). An example of this would be when a manager raises the pitch of his/her voice in order to be more affirming (relaxed, friendly, and attentive).

Research investigating the influence immediacy behaviors/cues have on subordinates had received a great deal of attention in earlier studies; however, research has been limited in years thereafter (Madlock, 2008). As just noted, research investigating the effect of nonverbal immediacy within an organizational/work place setting involving the relationship between superiors and subordinates has been limited, with the exception of Koermer et al. (1993), who, through the use of an exploratory qualitative investigation, examined how supervisors communicatively convey immediacy to subordinates, and Richmond and McCroskey (2000a), who explored the impact of supervisor and subordinate immediacy on relational and organizational outcomes.

Within the study conducted by Koermer et al. (1993), the authors sought to “assess how supervisors communicatively convey immediacy to their subordinates” (p. 270), both linguistically/nonverbally. In order to determine what communicative behaviors supervisors use to communicatively convey immediacy to their subordinates, Koermer et al. (1993) decided to examine supervisor/subordinate interaction from a
qualitative perspective. The authors report that this method allows for the collecting of data that would be rich in real-life experiences. The qualitative research technique specifically to be used by Koermer et al. (1993) was focus group interviews.

Prior to the conducting of the focus group interviews a focus group interview guide was created. This was to offer guidance for the group moderator by providing a way for the moderator to understand both the issues to be discussed and the questions that were designed by the researchers in order to explore those issues. Once the interview guide was created, the authors had an industrial psychologist, who, was not a part of the investigation, to evaluate the interview guide for grammatical/semantic accuracy and completeness. The interview guide was designed on the following guidelines:

Less than twelve questions were to be asked, questions were designed to solicit more than brief “yes” or “no” type answers, and that the language of questions had to be phrased in a manner participants could comprehend (p. 272).

Seven questions were created for the focus group interview: 1. Describe a conversation that you had with a supervisor in which you felt a sense of belonging, acceptance or closeness (Probe: What was the conversation about? What specifically did the supervisor say or do to make you feel this way?); 2. Describe a conversation that you had with a supervisor in which you felt a lack of acceptance, belonging or closeness (Probe: What was the conversation about? What specifically did the supervisor say or do to make you feel this way?); 3. Describe a conversation where you felt a supervisor was interested in what you were saying (Probe: What did the supervisor say or do to indicate interest?) 4. Describe a conversation where you felt a supervisor was not interested in what you were saying (Probe: What did the supervisor say or do to indicate a lack of
interest?); 5. Based on our earlier discussion, what types of conversations had the most effect on your own level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a supervisor? (Probe: How so? In what way?); 6. Is there anything else you would like to add that was not discussed earlier? (Koermer et al., 1993, p. 273). It was noted by the Koermer et al. (1993) that questions one and three were intended to stimulate “high” immediacy categories, and questions two and four were intended to stimulate “low” immediacy categories.

Once the focus group interview guide was finalized, Koermer et al. (1993) selected and trained a moderator/interviewer, who was not involved with the investigation. Koermer et al. (1993) cite Langer (1978) who suggested that a focus group moderator should be animated/spontaneous, have the ability to express their thoughts clearly, and have a sincere interest in listening to the interviewee/groups thoughts and feelings. Based on these criteria, Koermer et al. (1993) recruited a student who was “a senior majoring in speech at a small Southeastern University… as the focus group moderator” (pp. 272-273). Due to the lack of specialized programs designed to instruct the moderator on how to effectively and reliably conduct interviews within a focus group, the student who was recruited, was instructed to read specific literature provided by the authors on conducting/moderating the focus group.

Koermer et al. (1993) conducted a pilot test in order to assess both the moderator’s performance as well as the feasibility of the interview guide. This pilot test consisted of six students from an upper-level organizational communication course at a small Southeastern University. The senior author was also in attendance, but was so solely to observe the students’ moderating/interviewing abilities, and was not an active participant.
The pilot test revealed several concerns and necessary changes that had to be addressed before the study could move forward. 1. The pilot test revealed that several members of the focus group monopolized the conversation; 2. The moderator was not calling each participant by name. This was important not only to create a more interpersonal environment but also to allow for ease of transcribing the audiotapes that would be used during the actual focus group interviews; 3. The moderator was reminded to make sure he/she spent an equal amount of discussion time on each interview question, stay neutral to responses (i.e. reframe from using phrases such as “good answer”), and to debrief participants once the interview had ended.

After completing the pilot test and making the necessary changes, Koemer et al. (1993) moved forward with seeking out the individuals that would participate and make up the focus group(s) for the actual study. Based on scheduling concerns as well as the number of participants recruited, the authors conducted four separate focus group interviews that took place over the course of two weeks. “Each focus group meeting lasted no more than 75 minutes, participants were debriefed at the end of each interview session” (p. 274), and an audio recorder was used for the purpose of accurately transcribing each meeting/focus group afterwards.

The senior author transcribed the audio-recording from each of the four focus groups. Comments from participants ranged from a sentence to several paragraphs, and in all, 165 responses were analyzed and 11 categories created. The first six categories dealt with high immediacy with the latter five dealing with low immediacy, the 11 categories are as follows: 1. *Values subordinate input on job and/or personal matters*; 2. *Verbal/nonverbal attentiveness*; 3. *Confidence in subordinate ability*; 4. *Personal interest*;

*Verbal/nonverbal attentiveness*; 3. *Confidence in subordinate ability*; 4. *Personal interest*;

To test interrater reliability, the authors recruited two MBA students who were not involved with the investigation. Each student was given a complete set of data cards (created directly from the transcriptions) and then was asked to independently sort them into categories provided by the researchers. “Afterward, the coders collectively scrutinized all data set cards to finalize areas of agreement and disagreement… this resulted in a reliability coefficient of 84” (p. 275).

The findings of the Koermer et al. (1993) investigation first found that a superior who has “confidence in subordinate ability” had the most influence on subordinates’ satisfaction with said supervisor. Consequently, the superior who was reported as “putting down the subordinate” was found to have the most impact on dissatisfaction with the superior in question. Findings further showed that superiors/managers who regularly use positive communication (statements of appreciation and confidence in abilities; encouraging input), supportive messages (desire to assist), and actively show a willingness to listen to subordinates, were seen as producing the most favorable outcomes/perceptions.

Findings also indicated that subordinates who had supervisors who communicated in an immediate fashion were more likely to feel like the supervisor in question “respected them, encouraged more input, valued their work, and wanted to get to know
them professionally” (p.277). However, subordinates who had supervisors who do not communicate in an immediate fashion reported, “feeling like an outcast, betrayed, and work being a waste of time” (p. 277).

Of additional interest in the present study was that participants (subordinates) were able to describe subtle nuances… supervisors frequently used to express immediacy. Moreover to determine whether immediacy was [unquestionable], subordinates relied heavily on nonverbal cues (e.g., “shaking [his/her] head”, “blank look”, “direct eye contact”) that accompanied what supervisors said verbally (p.277).

Through the use of the immediacy principle, accommodation theory, reciprocity theory, and previous research, Virginia Richmond, and James McCroskey (2000a), set out to determine how a supervisors use of immediacy behaviors influence subordinates perceptions of said supervisors credibility, interpersonal attractiveness, the subordinates attitude toward both their supervisor and the communication they have with said supervisor, the reciprocity or accommodating behaviors associated with supervisor/subordinate immediacy communicative interactions, and the subordinates motivation and job satisfaction.

Prior to collecting data, Richmond and McCroskey (2000a) investigated various theories and literature that would become the basis for the study. The authors explain in their article that initially the nonverbal immediacy construct was not proposed as a communication construct, but rather as a social psychological explanation concerning human nonverbal behavior. Within social psychology, the use of nonverbal behaviors are viewed as a means for understanding motivation and internal state. Communication scholars, however, view nonverbal behaviors as a tool used by humans to communicate with and influence each other. Specifically within communication scholarship and within
the organizational context, nonverbal immediacy is seen as “a repertoire of nonverbal behaviors which supervisors may or may not use as messages to signal liking, positive evaluation, and positive affect (or their opposites) for their subordinates” (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000a, p. 86).

Over the years, the construct of nonverbal immediacy had produced such convincing results (and still does) that Richmond and McCroskey (2000b) proposed what they called the “principle of immediate communication” and argued that this principle would apply to any interpersonal communication context. The principle they proposed suggests that the more an individual communicates employing immediate behaviors, the more others will like, evaluate highly, and prefer them. The principle further suggests that the less an individual communicates in an immediate fashion, the more others will dislike, and negatively evaluate the communicator (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000b).

With this being said, Richmond and McCroskey (2000a) suggested that supervisors who are more immediate should be perceived more positively. Thus, the author’s advanced the following four hypothesis: Hypothesis one predicted that supervisors perceived as exhibiting higher immediacy will be perceived as more credible; Hypothesis two predicted that supervisors perceived as exhibiting higher immediacy will be perceived as more interpersonally attractive; Hypothesis three predicted that supervisors perceived as exhibiting higher immediacy will be evaluated more positively; Hypothesis four predicted that subordinates of supervisors perceived as exhibiting higher immediacy will evaluate the supervisors’ communication more positively.

In addition to the principle of immediate communication Richmond and McCroskey (2000a) also utilized the principle of reciprocity, and speech accommodation
theory within their study. According to the principle of reciprocity, during interpersonal interactions, people tend to reciprocate positive, and negative, behaviors directed to them (Gouldner, 1960). Richmond and McCroskey (2000a) thus expected within an organizational context that if a supervisor (or a subordinate) were to engage in nonverbal immediacy behaviors with a subordinate (or a supervisor), that the partner in the interaction would reciprocate the nonverbally immediate behaviors. “In short, if positive or negative affect is communicated via nonverbal immediacy behaviors, it will be reciprocated” (p. 87). This same pattern of behavior is predicted on the basis of speech accommodation theory (Giles, Mulač, Bradac, & Johnson, 1987). Speech accommodation theory suggests that individuals within a communicative interaction will adjust their style of speech to their communication partners in order to gain approval from said partner, or in order to maintain a positive social identity with the partner to whom they are communicating with. This considered, Richmond and McCroskey (2000a) posed the following hypothesis: supervisor and subordinate immediacy will be positively correlated.

Richmond and McCroskey (2000a) also investigated two outcome variables; subordinate job satisfaction and motivation. Richmond and McCroskey (2000a) investigated research conducted outside the communication studies discipline that had discovered, 1. Productive employees are generally employees who are highly motivated, and 2. Employees who are motivated, produce high quality work and are less likely to leave their jobs are generally employees who are satisfied with their jobs (Baum & Youngblood, 1975; Day & Hamblin, 1964; Student, 1968). From this literature, Richmond and McCroskey (2000a) posed two final hypotheses: hypothesis six predicted
that perceived supervisor immediacy will be positively correlated with subordinate motivation; and hypothesis seven predicted that perceived supervisor immediacy will be positively correlated with subordinate job satisfaction.

In addition to the aforementioned hypotheses, the authors posed one research question. “What is the most likely casual path between supervisor immediacy and subordinate motivation and job satisfaction?” (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000a, p. 88).

Richmond and McCroskey (2000a) recruited adult volunteers from a wide variety of organizations for the purpose of recruiting participants who would fill out the questionnaires required for the data collecting for this study. The adult volunteers (N=60) were students enrolled in extended learning classes in three different areas. Each volunteer was given 4 questionnaires and were instructed to give them to people at very different levels of the organization where they were employed. The volunteers were associated with 46 different organizations. All of the volunteers were employees in the organization in which they distributed questionnaires. The volunteers distributed a total of 240 questionnaires. A postage-paid return envelope addressed to the researchers accompanied each questionnaire. In total 224 questionnaires were returned.

Richmond and McCroskey (2000a) report within their study that all of the observed correlations were statistically significant and all of the hypotheses advanced were confirmed. Thus, according to the study, subordinates will see supervisors who are perceived as being more communicatively immediate as more credible, and as being more interpersonally attractive. Subordinates who perceived their supervisors as immediate are more likely to express positive attitudes toward both their supervisor, as well as, the communication they have with said supervisor. In addition, based on
reciprocity and accommodation theories, supervisors who communicate in an immediate fashion will produce a positive relationship between supervisor and subordinate immediacy; meaning subordinates will reciprocate immediate communicative behaviors observed in supervisors. Lastly, the analysis found a positive relationship between supervisor immediacy and subordinate motivation and job satisfaction; meaning that supervisors who employ immediate communicative behaviors during communicative interactions with subordinates are more likely to have subordinates who are motivated and have positive perceptions concerning job satisfaction.

In order to answer the research question and determine the extent to which supervisor immediacy may have a direct, as opposed to a mediated, impact on job satisfaction and/or motivation, path analyses were conducted by employing the CALIS procedure available in the SAS statistical package. Richmond and McCroskey (2000a) comment that, “the results of the path analyses suggest that organizations can justify spending more time and other resources on training supervisors (particularly new managers) to engage in the positive, immediate nonverbal communication behaviors” (p. 94).

Nonverbal immediacy behaviors/cues such as positive facial expressions, eye contact, vocal expressiveness, and various body gestures/movements are crucial elements within the superior-subordinate relationship (Teven, 2010). These nonverbal messages play an important role in interpersonal interactions, especially when considering relational outcomes such as impression formation, and with respect to attraction, social influence, and emotional expression (Burgoon, Buller, & Woodall, 1996). One of the objectives of the current study is to better understand the influence immediacy behaviors
have towards the source credibility construct, including the three dimensions that make it up (competence, trustworthiness, & goodwill). Previous research has consistently identified a positive relationship between nonverbal immediacy behaviors and perceived source credibility (Johnson & Miller, 2002; Schrodt & Witt, 2006; Schrodt et al., 2009; Teven & Hanson, 2004).

**Source Credibility**

Source credibility has been explored and scrutinized since the time of Aristotle (Thweatt & McCroskey, 1998), and has been studied within areas relating to speech, psychology, sociology, and education (McCroskey, 1966). Within the communication studies discipline, communication scholars have studied source credibility extensively for several decades now (Andersen & Clevenger, 1963; Berlo, Lemert, & Mertz, 1969; Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953; McCroskey & Teven, 1999; Teven, & Hanson, 2004; Self, 1996). This scholarly attention has mostly focused on the impact source credibility has on the communication process; the impact source credibility has on a variety of variables that concern communication outcomes, and on the nature of source credibility itself and its measurement (McCroskey & Young, 1981). Even with source credibility being very important to the communication process, Teven (2010) states “surprisingly, few studies have examined the ways in which supervisors establish and maintain credibility with subordinates…” (p. 72). Thus, one of the main objectives of this study is to examine source credibility within an organizational context by investigating how nonverbal immediacy and verbally aggressive messages influence perceptions of a managers overall credibility.
According to McCroskey and Young (1981) credibility can be defined as “the attitude toward a source of communication held at a given time by a communicator” (p. 24). Although this definition does not account for the dimensions of credibility, it is not dissimilar to Aristotle’s belief that credibility influences the receiver (Thweatt & McCroskey, 1998).

While most contemporary writers suggest that source credibility is the attitude toward a source of communication held at a given time by a receiver, it is commonly noted that this ‘attitude’ is not one-dimensional, but rather multidimensional (McCroskey and Young 1981, p. 24).

As noted by McCroskey and Young (1981) that source credibility is multidimensional, Aristotle, who referred to credibility as ethos, suggested that source credibility consists of three dimensions: competence (intelligence/practical wisdom), character (trustworthiness), and caring (goodwill) (Fienberg, 2012; Teven & McCroskey, 1997; Thweatt & McCroskey, 1998).

An individual who would be classified as being high in the competence (intelligence/practical wisdom) dimension would be reported as someone who possesses knowledge and/or expertise in a particular subject, be perceived as someone who is trained/qualified, and as someone who is seen as being knowledgeable and informed (McCroskey, 1992; McCroskey & Teven, 1999; McCroskey & Young, 1981). “If a [manager] is to be perceived as competent, he or she is perceived to know what he or she is talking about” (Teven & Hanson, 2004, p. 40). The competent manager would be reported as someone who possesses the ability to explain complex material in a simple/easy to understand way, as someone who is able to manage his/her work team, and as someone who has the ability to answer questions, and communicate in an effective manner (Teven & Hanson, 2004).
The second dimension, character (trustworthiness), is characterized as someone who is perceived to be honest, honorable, genuine, and all around trustworthy. A person who is reported as being high in character (trustworthiness) is someone who is generally moral and ethical in the decisions they make in their everyday actions (McCroskey & Teven, 1999). A person high in character is associated with the qualities of the “goodness” of a person (Frymier & Thompson, 1992). Within an organizational context, character (trustworthiness) would consider the degree to which subordinate(s) trust a manager. A manager reported as being high in character would also be reported as someone who provides rational explanations for the decisions that he/she makes, as someone who treats his/her employees/subordinates fairly, provides immediate feedback, and never embarrasses subordinates or is verbally aggressive/abusive towards them (Teven & Hanson, 2004).

Caring, which is also known as goodwill (McCroskey & Richmond, 2000; McCroskey & Teven, 1999) is defined as a concern for someone’s personal welfare (McCroskey, 1992). Managers who reported as being high in the caring dimension of source credibility, are also reported as individuals who are understanding, empathic, and responsive; these managers are subordinate/employee centered, not self-centered and have said subordinates’/employees’ interest at heart and not their own (McCroskey, 1992; Teven & McCroskey, 1997). Communication scholars see perceived caring (goodwill) as a means for individuals to open various communication channels more widely for their communication partners/interactants (McCroskey & Teven, 1999).

Although managers can possess varying levels of the dimensions that make up source credibility (competence, character, and caring), only the manager who is reported
as being high in all three dimensions would be considered high in source credibility overall (e.g., McCroskey, 1992).

In their summary of experimental research in ethos at that time, Andersen and Clevenger (1963) discuss how the generation or altering of a receiver’s perceived image of a communicator’s source credibility falls into two categories: extrinsic ethos, and intrinsic ethos.

Extrinsic ethos consists of “techniques employed before the message itself began” (Andersen & Clevenger, 1963, p. 69). These techniques deal with the generation, or modification, of a communicator’s level of perceived credibility external to (and as mentioned above, prior to) the actual presentation/message (Andersen & Clevenger, 1963). This may involve a manager’s attempt to generate and/or modify their perceived level of source credibility prior to a meeting with employee(s). This may, for example, involve having their name and title on a document/email, or introducing themselves using said name and title. For example, “Greetings/Hello, my name is Dr. John Doe, I am the senior operating manager here at [Company name]. [Company name] has decided to make a few changes to employee day-to-day activities and I think this will help in improving both productivity, and safety.”

Intrinsic ethos consists of “techniques employed by the speaker during the [communicative interaction]” (Andersen & Clevenger, 1963, p. 69). These techniques deal with the generation, or modification, of a communicator’s level of perceived credibility internal to (and as mentioned above, during) the actual presentation/message (Andersen & Clevenger, 1963). This may involve a manager attempting to generate and/or modify their perceived level of source credibility during a communicative
interaction with his/her employee(s). This may, for example, involve using their name and title as a means of building credibility and confidence with a group of employees during a meeting. For example; “Greetings/Hello, [Company name] has decided to make a few changes to employee day-to-day activities and as someone who holds a Ph.D. in this area of study, and as the senior operating manager here at [Company name], I think this will help to improve both productivity, and safety.”

Although extrinsic and intrinsic ethos (source credibility) may be thought of as separate, Andersen and Clevenger (1963) note that, “in real life [discourse] situations, the final ethos is a product of the interaction of [both] extrinsic and intrinsic ethos” (p. 69). Meaning that we create and develop perceptions of an individual’s level of perceived credibility prior to, and during, a communicative interaction, and that this perceived level of source credibility (ethos) continues to be developed, and at times positively/negatively changed, during both single and multiple communicative interactions with said individual.

Research has suggested that an individual who is observed utilizing immediate behaviors is perceived to have higher levels of credibility than individuals who are not observed utilizing immediate behavior (Johnson & Miller, 2002; Teven & Hanson, 2004). In fact, many scholars argue that immediacy is the behavior that is most frequently associated with the source credibility construct (McCroskey & Teven, 1999; McCroskey & Young, 1981; Teven & McCroskey, 1997).

In a study conducted by Santelli, Miller, and Katt (2011), investigating the relationship between nonverbal immediacy and credibility, the authors found a positive relationship between perceived instructor nonverbal immediacy and all three of the
dimensions that make up the source credibility construct (competence, character/trustworthiness, and goodwill/caring) among students. Research within instructional communication has consistently identified a positive relationship between nonverbal immediacy and credibility (Johnson & Miller, 2002; Schodt & Witt, 2006; Santilli, et al., 2011; Schrod et. al., 2009; Teven & Hanson, 2004). Thus, with nonverbal immediacy and credibility consistently being identified as having such a close and positive relationship, the author of this study seeks to better understand whether perceptions of a manager’s level of credibility, including the three dimensions that make up the credibility construct (competence, character/trustworthiness, and caring) is altered depending if a manager uses verbal aggression and nonverbal immediacy.

Cognitive Valence Theory

Cognitive valence theory (CVT) provides a way to further explain and understand how immediacy behaviors/cues positively influence perceptions and relational outcomes (see Figure 1 in Appendix A).

As suggested by Albert Mehrabian (1971), “people are drawn towards persons and things they like, evaluate highly [positively valence], and prefer; and they avoid or move away from things they dislike, evaluate negatively [negatively valence], and do not prefer” (p. 1). As suggested earlier, immediacy behaviors are divided into two categories: verbal immediacy (e.g. the use of inclusive pronouns, humor, compliments, etc.) and nonverbal immediacy (e.g. positive eye contact, touching behaviors such as handshakes, using expressive, enthusiastic vocal behaviors, etc.). These verbal and nonverbal communicative behaviors have the ability to create psychological closeness within others, and these behaviors are at the core of CVT (Andersen, 1998, 2008; Mehrabian, 1971).
CVT postulates that if immediacy behaviors/cues are positively valenced, or perceived as being positive by an individual being communicated to/with, positive relational outcomes will result. However, if immediacy behaviors/cues are negatively valenced, perceived negatively by those being communicated to, negative relational outcomes will result (Andersen, 1998; Infante et al., 2010).

In order for an interaction to be positively or negatively valenced, an individual must first be aroused/stimulated by the immediate behaviors being observed (Andersen, 1998). Levels of arousal that are too low and possibly go unnoticed produce virtually no change in the relationship. However, too much arousal can lead to negative relational outcomes. As suggested by CVT, a moderate level of arousal (typical and found in most interactions) is most likely to create positive relational outcomes (Andersen, 1998; Infante et al., 2010; Infante et al., 2003) (see Figure 1 in Appendix A).

Along with the arousal or stimulation immediate behaviors create and ultimately contribute to the evaluation, or valancing, of the communicative interaction between the communicator and the interactant(s), so do our cognitive schemata hold an influence on the way we valence interactions. Within our day-to-day life we all have and utilize social knowledge (cognitive schemata) in order to make sense of the interactions we experience throughout the course of our day. Social knowledge (or cognitive schemata), that influences the valancing of everyday interactions include: our personal cultural norms, personality, interpersonal valence, the situation/environment the communicative interaction is taking place in, the state of our mental, emotional, and physical health, and the relationship we have with the individual(s) we’re communicating with (Andersen 1998, 2008).
The first schema outlines how our culture provides us with clearly defined rules that outline a variety of behaviors (Andersen 1998, 2008). Personality (the second scheme), deals with a person’s degree of sociality, their attitudes toward touch, their shyness, the individuals pursuit of or avoidance of sensation seeking behavior, and a number of other traits that researchers have studied (Andersen, 2008). The third schema, interpersonal valence, deals with the way we evaluate the individual with whom we are interacting, and according to Andersen (1998, 2008) and Infante et. al., (2010), we tend to perceive immediate behaviors as being more positively valenced with those who we already evaluate positively and tend to perceive immediate behaviors as being more negatively valenced with those who we already evaluate negatively. The situation/environment where the interaction takes place is the fourth cognitive schema and deals with how the environment or where an interaction takes place (e.g. classroom setting, an executive boardroom) influences how specific behaviors (e.i. nonverbal immediacy behaviors/cues) are evaluated and perceived. According to Andersen (1998, 2008), not all situations/environments will be perceived and evaluated equally. The cognitive schema of state explains how an individual’s emotional, mental, and physical health on any given day influences how they valence interactions. “Everyone has good days and bad days” (Andersen, 2008, p. 516), and this schema concerns our emotional/mental state and consist of short-term internal conditions that can affect the way we communicate within a situation (Infante et. al., 2010). The last cognitive schema, and considered to be the most important, is the relationship between the individuals communicating. Specific categories such as friend, romantic partner, acquaintance, boss,
and so on, greatly influence how our behaviors are perceived and ultimately valenced (Andersen, 1998, 2008).

When taken together the six cognitive schemas explain how the use of both verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors can influence the relational outcome between the communicator and the individual(s) the communicator is interacting with. The six cognitive schemas allow for an understanding, interpretation, and prediction concerning the communicative interactions we have every day. According to CVT, if the immediacy behaviors exhibited by the communicator match all of the receiver’s six cognitive schemata, those immediacy behaviors will be valenced positively (Andersen, 2008; Infante et al., 2010) and three positive relational outcomes will result (Andersen, 2008). However, it is important to note here that, in order for a positive valence to occur, all six cognitive schemata need to be valenced positively (Andersen, 2008). If any one of the six schemata are violated, negative valencing can and does occur concerning the immediacy behaviors being communicated (Andersen, 1998), and the negatively valenced reaction usually occurs within seconds resulting in three negative relational outcomes (Andersen, 2008).

If all six cognitive schemas are positively valenced the three positive relational outcomes include; 1. Positive perceptions and attitudes toward the communicator; 2. The interactant(s) will be more likely to reciprocate the immediacy behaviors, including communicating with friendly and warm behaviors; 3. There will be an increase in closeness and experienced relational growth between the communicator and the interactant(s). However, if any one of the six schemas are negatively valenced the three negative relational outcomes include; 1. Negative perceptions and attitudes toward the
communicator; 2. There will be an increase in avoidance, and a reduction in the immediacy behavior used by the interactant(s); 3. There will be a decrease in closeness and relational growth between the communicator and the interactant(s) (Andersen, 1998, 2008) (see Figure 1 in Appendix A).

Purpose of the Study

Immediacy has received a great deal of attention over the last half-century within the field of communication studies. In general, this research has revealed that communicators who engage in immediacy behaviors are perceived more positively than communicators who do not engage in immediacy behaviors (Richmond, et al., 2003). Early research, sought to determine the importance of immediacy in a classroom setting (Richmond & McCroskey, 1992), and has specifically concentrated on the positive affect immediacy holds within a classroom setting, as well as, the impact immediacy use has on students perceptions of both the teacher as well as the messages/information they (the teacher) communicate.

Contemporary research concerning immediacy, has examined immediacy within the context of marketing (Kreps & Neuhauser, 2013; Doohwang & LaRose, 2011); online (Antoniievic, 2008; Baker, 2010; Conaway, Easton & Schmidt, 2005; Lybarger & Smith, 2011; Schutt, Allen & Laumakis, 2009); athletics/coaching (Turman, 2008); and within romantic relationships (Sidelinger, Frisby & McMullen, 2012; Lee, Sbarra, Mason & Law, 2011; Hoyt & Yeater, 2009). In an effort to further add to this area of research the purpose of this study is to better understand the positive role nonverbal immediacy plays, and the destructive, deleterious effects verbal aggression yields within a workplace setting.
Very little research has been devoted to investigating the construct of immediacy together with verbal aggression, thus this study will assist in providing an understanding of how nonverbal immediacy and verbal aggression interact to influence perceptions of the source credibility construct; including competence (intelligence/practical wisdom), character (trustworthiness), and caring (goodwill), and the relaxed, friendly, and attentive dimensions of communicator style and subsequently, fill this gap in contemporary communication scholarship. Research by Beatty and McCroskey (1997) and Rancer, Whitecap, Kosberg and Avtgis (1997) suggests that it is difficult to alter the trait predisposition of verbal aggressiveness, and hence, the manifestation of verbal aggression by those high in the trait. Therefore, it would be helpful to determine if other communication behaviors that accompany verbally aggressive messages could mitigate or reduce the negative effects of said verbal behavior. Considering previous research by Infante et al. (1996), Rancer et al. (2003), and Jordan-Jackson et al. (2008) employing an affirming communicator style may be one way. Perhaps employing nonverbal immediacy behaviors might constitute another way. Research has continuously found that nonverbal immediacy positively influences observers, by creating the perception that the communicator is more caring (Thweatt & McCroskey, 1998), Credible (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000a; Santilli, et al., 2011; Thweatt & McCroskey, 1998), and less verbally aggressive (Rocca & McCroskey, 1999). An understanding of how immediacy and verbally aggressive behaviors interact may provide a way for superiors who engage in verbal aggression, to mitigate the deleterious effects of their destructive communication behaviors.
Hypothesis

Aggressive communication behaviors have been investigated in the communication discipline for more than 30 years, and even though the reviewed research clearly demonstrates that destructive verbally aggressive behaviors can be detrimental to an individual’s relationship with others, research has also clearly demonstrated that when immediacy behaviors are utilized in communicative interactions a variety of positive relational outcomes results. Thus, the following hypothesis is offered:

H1: Managers who do not use verbally aggressive messages and who are nonverbally immediate will be seen as higher in source credibility (competence, character, and caring), and higher in the friendly, attentive, and relaxed dimensions of communicator style, than managers who use verbally aggressive messages and who are not nonverbally immediate.
CHAPTER II

STUDY I: PILOT STUDY MANIPULATION CHECK

Participants

Prior to conducting the experiment that would provide the information needed to investigate the hypothesis, a pilot study that served as a means of creating and conducting a manipulation check for the video stimuli first had to be conducted. In order to conduct the pilot study, 158 participants were recruited though the use of a convenient sample from introductory communication studies courses at a large Midwestern University. This was accomplished by asking instructors to allow the administration of the videotape/questionnaires concerning a fictional manager’s use of nonverbal immediacy and verbal aggression during regular class sessions. The only qualifying characteristic for participation was that the participants were at least 18 years of age. Participation for the pilot study manipulation check was voluntary and students were made aware of this in verbal and written form (see Appendix B). Some, but not all students received in-class extra credit for participating in the pilot study.

Creation of The Scripts

Scripts for four versions of a conflict within an organizational context were first produced prior to the filming of the video conditions (see Appendix C). The four scripts used within the study created a 2X2 factorial design where the actor portraying the manager utilized verbal aggression (used verbally aggressive messages/did not use
verbally aggressive messages), as well as nonverbal immediacy behaviors (used nonverbal immediacy cues/did not use nonverbal immediacy cues), representing four scripts total. The four scripts were written and centered around poor job performance review scores received by a fictional character named Sam, an employee for a major manufacturing company. Sam is called into his manager’s office to discuss Sam’s scores concerning the quality/quantity of his work, as well as, punctuality/tardiness concerning his work habits, as indicated by the poor performance review score.

In the scripts where the manager would utilize verbally aggressive messages, the actor was scripted to use the following behaviors: threats, character attacks, competence attacks, and ridicule; in the two scripts where the manager was portrayed as not being verbally aggressive, these messages were not used (see Appendix C). In the scripts utilizing nonverbal immediacy behaviors, the actor was scripted to use behaviors such as: reducing proxemic distance, the use of touching behaviors, good positive eye contact or gazing behaviors, positive facial expressions, positive head nods, increases in gestures, relaxed body position, the use of purposeful body movements, and orientation of the body and head toward the employee (Sam); in the two scripts where the manager was not nonverbally immediate, these behaviors were not exhibited by the actor (see Appendix C). The four scripts (video conditions) are as follows: In script (video condition) 1, the manager was observed using verbally aggressive messages, and was also observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors. Within script (video condition) 2, the manager was observed using verbally aggressive messages and was not observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors. For script (video condition) 3, the manager did not use verbally
aggressive messages, and was observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors. In the final script (video condition) 4, the manager was not observed using verbally aggressive messages, and was not observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors.

*Procedures for Study One*

Once the scripts were written and deemed satisfactory, two semi-professional male actors were recruited. Once the actors agreed to serve as the actors for the video stimuli, they were given the scripts and provided a suitable amount of time to read the scripts and prepare prior to setting up a time/day appropriate to film the videos.

After the four videos were created, a pre-study manipulation check was conducted in order to test the effectiveness of the immediacy/verbally aggressive behaviors viewed in the four video conditions. 158 participants who were not a part of the participant pool for the actual experiment were recruited for the purpose of the manipulation check. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four video conditions. Participants first viewed one of the four video conditions and then were asked to indicate the amount of perceived immediacy and verbal aggressiveness that was observed within the video conditions by filling out a questionnaire that consisted of Richmond, et al. (2003) *Nonverbal Immediacy Scale*, and Infante and Wigley’s (1986) *Verbal Aggressiveness Scale* (see Appendix D).

For the purpose of measuring the amount of nonverbal immediacy observed in the videotapes a modified version of the *Nonverbal Immediacy* measure by Richmond, et al. (2003) was used (see Appendix D). The scale was modified from its original version in order to reflect the context/situation viewed within the video conditions (e.g. “The manager avoided eye contact with his employee during the performance review”, “The
manager smiled when he talked with the employee”) The modified scale contained 5 items, measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = Never to 5 = Very often). Scores ranged from 5 to 24 ($M = 13.38$, $SD = 4.96$); with the higher the mean, the greater the perceived nonverbal immediacy behavior. Reliability tests for the nonverbal immediacy measure were analyzed via SPSS, and a Cronbach’s coefficient alpha was reported and the measure was deemed reliable ($\alpha = .85$).

A modified version of Infante & Wigley (1986), *Verbal Aggressiveness Scale* was used in order to measure the degree of perceived verbal aggressiveness observed within the videotapes (see Appendix D). The scale was modified from its original version in order to reflect the context/situation viewed within the video conditions (e.g. “The manager was extremely careful to avoid attacking the employee’s intelligence”, “The manager attacked Sam’s character in order to help correct his work performance”). This scale contained 5 items, measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = Never to 5 = Very often). Scores for the perceived verbal aggressiveness ranged from 5 to 25 ($M = 17.17$, $SD = 5.52$); the higher the mean, the greater the perceived verbal aggressiveness. Reliability tests for the verbal aggressiveness scale were analyzed via SPSS, and a Cronbach’s coefficient alpha was reported and the measure was found to be reliable ($\alpha = .82$).

Study one served as a means for producing the scripts that was then used to create the video conditions that was then used for the second study (the experiment), therefore no other information, including demographic information, was obtained during study one.
Results of Study One

Independent t-tests were conducted on the four video conditions in order to test whether the participants perceived a difference in the video conditions where the actor portraying the manager used verbally aggressive messages/did not use verbally aggressive messages and whether participants perceived a difference in the video conditions where the actor portraying the manager used nonverbal immediacy behaviors/did not use nonverbal immediacy behaviors. Results of the independent t-tests indicated that participants perceived the video condition where the actor portraying the manager used verbally aggressive messages as being significantly more verbally aggressive than the video condition where the actor did not use verbally aggressive messages (t(154) = 13.64, p = .000). The mean score for the video condition where the actor portraying the manager used verbal aggression was $M = 21.35$, whereas the mean score for the video condition where the actor did not use verbal aggression was $M = 13.20$. Results of a second independent t-test indicated that participants perceived the video condition where the actor used nonverbal immediacy behaviors to be significantly more immediate than that of the video condition where the actor did not use nonverbal immediacy behaviors (t(155) = 20.02, p = .000). The mean score for the video condition where the actor portraying the manager used nonverbal immediacy was $M = 17.67$, whereas the mean score for the video condition where the actor did not use nonverbal immediacy was $M = 9.26$. 
Participants

In order to test the hypothesis offered by the author an experiment employing 415 participants was conducted. Participants for the experiment were recruited through the use of a convenient sample from introductory communication studies courses at a large Midwestern University. This was accomplished by asking instructors to allow the administration of the videotape/questionnaires concerning a fictional manager’s use of nonverbal immediacy and verbal aggression during regular class sessions. The only qualifying characteristic for participation was that the participants were at least 18 years of age. Participation for the study was voluntary and students were made aware of this in verbal and written form (see Appendix B). Some, but not all students received in-class extra credit for participating in the experiment.

Participants were asked to self report various demographic information detailing their gender, age, race, current class status, courses completed within the communication studies discipline as well as, ACT/SAT standardized testing scores. Among the 415 participants recruited for the experiment, 180 (43.4%) were male, and 227 (54.7%) were female. Eight participants did not report gender. Participant ages ranged from 18 to 59 years, with a mean age of 21.70 years of age ($SD = 5.69$). Twenty participants did not report age. Race was also reported; 52 participants reported their race as being African
American (12.5%), 9 reported as being Asian American (2.2%), 312 reported Caucasian (75.2%), 7 reported their race as Hispanic American (1.7%), 2 participants reported Native American (0.5%), and 13 participants reported Other (3.1%). Twenty participants did not report their race. Among the participants for this study, 204 (49.2%) were freshman, 70 (16.9%) were sophomore, 59 (14.2%) were junior, and 68 (16.4) were seniors. Fourteen participants did not report class status. In addition to the aforementioned demographic information, participants were also asked to self-report the classes they had successfully completed within the department of communication studies. Of the 415 participants recruited for the experiment, 73 (17.6%) had taken and successfully completed Oral Communication, for Intro to Public Speaking, 274 (66%); Effective Oral Communication, 122 (29%); Interpersonal Communication, 83 (20%); Argumentation, 55 (13.3%); Advanced Public Speaking, 32 (7.7%); Intercultural Communication, 69 (16.6%), and Nonverbal Communication, 36 (8.7). Seven students did not report the classes they had successfully completed within the communication studies department.

Student participants also reported ACT and SAT scores. ACT scores ranged from 14 to 35, with a mean ACT score of 23.58 (SD = 3.88). One hundred twenty-five students did not report their ACT scores. In addition only 27 students of the 415 surveyed reported SAT scores. Due to this low frequency, SAT scores were not subject to analysis. For the purpose of determining whether or not there was a random distribution of students within the four video conditions based on ACT scores a one-way ANOVA was conducted. The ACT/SAT standardized tests are administered using the same test design, and are administered in the same manner for all students who take them. The conditions in which
the ACT/SAT standardized tests are administered, the procedures used for scoring, and
the ways these standardized test scores are interpreted are consistent across the entire
nation. The ACT/SAT standardized tests are used to judge the performance of students
and determine their proficiency alongside other standardized test takers. These
consistencies allow for a reliable comparison concerning the test takers, and determining
the random distribution of participants, based on academic performance, within this
experiment. Results of the one-way ANOVA showed no significant differences between
the distribution of students within the four video conditions, $F(3, 290) = .506, p > .05$,
partial eta-squared = .02.

*Procedures for Experiment*

After the videotapes were created and the manipulation checks were performed
and deemed successful, and as already mentioned, participants for the actual experiment
were recruited from introductory communication studies courses. Participants were
assigned to view one of the four video conditions created from the scripts mentioned
earlier within this document (see Appendix C). As noted previously, the four videotapes
presented two male actors portraying a manager and an employee who is meeting in the
manager’s office, for the purpose of discussing the poor performance review scores
received by Sam (the employee). Within the video conditions, the manager was observed
using/not using nonverbal immediacy behaviors and using verbally aggressive
messages/not using verbally aggressive messages during the conversation, thus creating a
2X2 factorial design.
Dependent Variable Questionnaire

In order to investigate the hypothesis, the experimental groups completed a series of questionnaires following the viewing of the assigned video. Participants completed the following scales assessing numerous aspects of the communicative behaviors observed within the assigned video condition (see Appendix E to view the questionnaire in its entirety).

Measurement of Competence & Character

In order to measure the amount of credibility perceived within the assigned video condition, a modified version of the Source Credibility scale by McCroskey and Teven (1999) was used. The original scale contains 18 items, measured using a 7-point semantic differential scale (example items include: Intelligent/Unintelligent, Untrustworthy/Trustworthy, Informed/Uninformed, Unethical/Ethical). The Cronbach’s coefficient alpha for this scale has been reported as ranging between .80 to .94 by McCroskey and Teven (1999). The original scale developed by McCroskey and Teven (1999), measured the three dimensions of credibility; competence (intelligence/practical wisdom), character (trustworthiness), and caring (goodwill). For organizational and formatting purposes this scale was modified, and the items that assessed the caring dimension was removed from the scale, and Teven and McCroskey’s (1997) caring scale (discussed below) was used in the place of the removed items. Therefore the scale used for the purpose of this study consisted of 10 items total. Since the caring dimension was excluded from this scale, this study will report separate Cronbach’s coefficient alpha scores for the competence and character dimensions respectively.
For the purpose of this study, the source credibility scale consisted of 10 items total. Of these 10 items, the competence dimension was composed of five items, and the character dimension was composed of five items. For the present study one item was removed from the competence dimension of the scale because the item was not reliable; the item removed was: item #9 - “Incompetent/Competent”. Once this item was removed a Cronbach’s coefficient alpha for the competence dimension of the source credibility scale was found to be reliable (α = .84). Additionally, one item was removed from the character dimension of the scale because the item was not reliable; the item removed was: item #6 - “Honorable/Dishonorable. Once this item was removed a Cronbach’s coefficient alpha for the character dimension of the source credibility scale was found to be reliable (α = .73).

Measurement of Caring

In order to measure the amount of caring participants perceived the manager as possessing within the assigned video condition, this study utilized a modified version of the Caring scale by Teven and McCroskey (1997). The scale was modified from its original version in order to reflect the context/situation viewed within the video conditions (e.g. “Has the employees interests at heart/Doesn’t have the employees interests at heart”). The original scale contained 10 items, measured using a 7-point semantic differential scale (example items include: caring/non-caring, unconcerned/concerned, self-centered/not self-centered, etc.). The Cronbach’s coefficient alpha for this scale has been reported to be .95 by Teven and McCroskey (1997). Within the modified scale used for this study, two items were condensed into one (understands how I feel/doesn’t understand how I feel; doesn’t understand how I think/understands
how I think). These two items were condensed into the following: item #9 -
“Understands/Not Understand. However, this item was removed because it was found to be unreliable. In addition, one other item was removed from the scale: item #6 – Empathic/Apathetic. This item was found to be unreliable. Once these items were removed the final scale consisted of 7 items and a Cronbach’s coefficient alpha for the current study was found to be reliable (\( \alpha = .88 \)).

Measurement of Affirming Communicator Style

A modified version of the Communicator Style measure (short form) by Montgomery and Norton (1981) was used to measure the managers perceived style for communicating. The scale was modified from its original version in order to reflect the context/situation viewed within the video conditions (e.g. “Under pressure the manager comes across as a relaxed speaker”, “The manager readily expresses admiration for others”, “The manager is an extremely attentive communicator”). The scale by Montgomery and Norton (1981) contained 44 items in total and measured the following communicator style dimensions: impression leaving, contentious, open, dramatic, dominant, precise, relaxed, friendly, attentive, animated, and communicator image. Within the seminal article these dimensions were measured using a 6-point Likert-type scale and participants were asked to report on the way they communicated after reading 4 descriptive sentences explaining each dimension. For example, after reading the four items (sentences) describing the friendly communicator style, participants responded using the following scale:
Out of a random group of five people, I would probably have a more friendly style than (circle one choice):

All of them  4 of them  3 of them  2 of them  1 of them  none of them

A modified version of this scale was utilized in the current study and was only interested in measuring the affirming dimensions of communicator style. The affirming dimensions of communicator style include: relaxed, friendly, and attentive. The final scale used was comprised of 12 items (each of the three dimensions was composed of 4 items each). Participants were asked to indicate their feelings about the manager they saw within the video condition for each item using a 6-point Likert-type scale, ranging from “6” = Strongly Agree to “1” = Strongly Disagree. The Cronbach’s coefficient alpha for this scale was not provided within the seminal article. However the original longer version Norton, (1978) reported the following internal Cronbach’s coefficient alphas: relaxed ($\alpha = .71$); friendly ($\alpha = .37$); and attentive ($\alpha = .57$). Cronbach’s coefficient alphas for the current study are: relaxed ($\alpha = .79$); friendly ($\alpha = .90$); and attentive ($\alpha = .84$).
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS OF STUDY TWO: THE EXPERIMENT

The primary interest of the current study was stated in the hypothesis: Managers who do not use verbally aggressive messages and who are nonverbally immediate will be seen as higher in source credibility (competence, character, and caring), and higher in the friendly, attentive, and relaxed dimensions of communicator style, than managers who use verbally aggressive messages and who are not nonverbally immediate.

In order to check that the dimensions of the two constructs being investigated (source credibility/the affirming communicator style) were properly correlated as suggested by previous research A Pearson’s correlational analysis was performed on the dependent variables so as to determine if the data collected for the purpose of the experiment was representative of the constructs mentioned above. The results of the Pearson’s correlation analysis indicated that there was a strong correlation for the dimensions of source credibility (competence, character, & caring) as well as a strong correlation for the dimensions of the affirming dimensions of communicator style (relaxed, friendly, & attentive) (for Pearson’s Correlations see Tables 1 & 2 in Appendix A).

In order to test this hypothesis, two, 2 X 2 between-subjects multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA’s) were performed on six dependent variables: the competence (intelligence /practical wisdom), character (trustworthiness), and caring (goodwill)
dimensions of credibility, and on the relaxed, friendly and attentive dimensions of communicator style. The first MANOVA examined the dependent variables of competence (intelligence/practical wisdom), character (trustworthiness), and caring (goodwill) by the two independent variables of verbal aggression and nonverbal immediacy. The second, MANOVA explored the dependent variables of the friendly, relaxed, and attentive dimensions of communicator style by the two independent variables of verbal aggression and nonverbal immediacy.

With the use of Wilks’s Lambda criterion, the results showed that all dependent variables were significantly influenced by both the managers’ use of verbally aggressive messages, as well as, the manager’s use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors (for main effect means see Tables 3 & 4 in Appendix A).

In addition to the MANOVAs, a one-way ANOVA was conducted comparing the means between the four video conditions in order to more completely interpret the results of the interaction effects; specifically this was performed in order to determine which means were significantly different when comparing all four video conditions. The four video conditions are as follows: in video condition 1, the manager was observed using verbally aggressive messages, and was also observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors. Within video condition 2, the manager was observed using verbally aggressive messages and was not observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors. For video condition 3, the manager did not use verbally aggressive messages, and was observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors. In the final video condition, video condition 4, the manager was not observed using verbally aggressive messages, and was not observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors. Although results for all four of the video
conditions are reported, this study is specifically interested in the two video conditions that test the hypothesis: video condition 2, where the manager was observed using verbally aggressive messages but was not observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors; and video condition 3, where the manager was not observed using verbally aggressive messages, but was observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors (for mean comparisons see Tables 5 – 10 Appendix A).

Dependent Variable: Competence

Results indicated a significant main effect for the dependent variable of competence concerning a manager’s use/a managers non-use of verbally aggressive messages, $F(3, 398) = 56.11, p < .001$, partial eta-squared = .12. These results show that a manager’s competence will be perceived significantly different when the manager utilizes verbally aggressive messages than when the manager does not use verbally aggressive messages. The results also indicate that the manager who uses verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being significantly less competent, than the manager who does not use verbally aggressive messages (see Table 3 in Appendix A). However, no significant main effect was observed for the manager’s use/non use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors, $F(3, 398) = .152, p > .05$, partial eta-squared = .00. The manager was not perceived to have a significantly different competence level whether the manager used/did not use nonverbal immediacy behaviors. This finding suggests that the manager who was observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors was not perceived to be significantly more or significantly less competent than the manager who was observed not using nonverbal immediacy behaviors within the video conditions (see Table 4 in Appendix A).
The results indicated a significant interaction effect for competence when observing the interaction of the two independent variables (verbally aggressive messages/nonverbal immediacy behaviors), $F(3, 395) = 12.79, p < .001$, partial eta-squared = .03. These results reveal that a manager’s use of both verbally aggressive messages and nonverbal immediacy will interact to create significantly different perceptions of the manager’s level of competence. This finding indicates that a manager who is observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors, and not using verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being significantly more competent than any of the other 3 video conditions (see Table 5 in Appendix A).

Results of a one-way ANOVA comparing the means between the four video conditions provided further understanding of this interaction effect, and revealed a significant difference between the two video conditions being compared in order to test the hypothesis (video condition 2 & 3). Video condition 2, where the manager was viewed using verbally aggressive messages but was not viewed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors; and video condition 3, where the manager was not viewed using verbally aggressive messages, but was viewed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors, the results are as follows: $F(3, 406) = 22.53, p < .001$. For the purpose of testing the hypothesis, the results of the one-way ANOVA revealed that for the dependent variable of competence, the mean for condition 3 was found to be significantly higher than condition 2; there was a mean difference of 4.44 $(p < .001)$ (for mean comparisons see Table 5 in Appendix A). According to these findings, participants within this experiment saw the manager in video condition 3, where the manager was not verbally aggressive, and used nonverbal immediacy behaviors, as being significantly higher in perceived
competence when compared to video condition 2 where the manager was viewed not using nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but was viewed using verbally aggressive messages. Thus, the manager who uses nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but does not use verbally aggressive messages, will be perceived as being significantly more competent, as someone who possesses significantly more intelligence /practical wisdom, than management who does not use nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but does use verbally aggressive messages; supporting the hypothesis.

In further comparing the means between the four video conditions, it provides an even deeper understanding of this interaction. According to the mean scores provided by the one-way ANOVA, video condition 3 where nonverbal immediacy (NVI) was used, and verbal aggression (VA) was not used yielded the highest perceptions of competence (intelligence/practical wisdom) (M = 25.39). As mentioned above, this finding supports the stated hypothesis. This finding indicates that the manager who uses nonverbally immediate behaviors and who does not use verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being more competent than any of the other video conditions discussed below. Video condition 4 (did not use NVI/did not use VA) yielded the second highest perceptions of competence (M = 23.26). Video condition 2 (did not use NVI/used VA) generated the third highest perceptions of competence (M = 20.95). Video condition 1 (used NVI/used VA) yielded the forth, and least highest perceptions of competence (M = 18.70). These findings suggest that the manager who uses nonverbally immediate behaviors and who does not use verbally aggressive messages while communicating, will be perceived as possessing the highest levels of competence, and the manager who uses nonverbally immediate behaviors, and uses verbally aggressive messages will be
perceived as having the lowest levels of perceived competence (for mean comparisons see Table 5 in Appendix A).

**Dependent Variable: Character (Trustworthiness)**

Results indicated a significant main effect for the dependent variable of character concerning a manager’s use/non-use of verbally aggressive messages, $F(3, 398) = 87.04$, $p < .001$, partial eta-squared = .18. According to these results, perceptions of the manager’s level of character is significantly influenced when the manager was viewed using verbally aggressive messages as compared to when he was viewed not using verbally aggressive messages. This main effect indicated that the manager who uses verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being significantly lower in character (significantly less trustworthy), than a manager who does not use verbally aggressive messages (see Table 3 in Appendix A). A significant main effect was also found for a managers use/non-use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors, $F(3, 398) = 12.59$, $p < .001$, partial eta-squared = .03. These results show that a manager’s character will be perceived significantly different depending upon whether the manager uses nonverbal immediacy behaviors or does not use nonverbal immediacy behaviors. This finding shows that the manager who was observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors was perceived to be significantly higher in character, than the manager who was observed not using nonverbal immediacy behaviors within the video conditions (see Table 4 in Appendix A).

Results further indicated a significant interaction effect for character concerning the interaction of the two independent variables (verbally aggressive messages/nonverbal immediacy behaviors), $F(3, 395) = 21.82$, $p < .001$, partial eta-squared = .05. These results show that a manager’s use of both verbally aggressive messages and nonverbal
immediacy will interact to create significantly different perceptions of the manager’s level of character. This finding indicates that a manager who is observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors, and observed not using verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being significantly higher in character, than any of the other 3 video conditions (for mean comparisons see Table 6 in Appendix A).

In order to further understand this interaction effect, results of a one-way ANOVA comparing the means between the four video conditions revealed a significant difference between the two video conditions being compared in order to test the hypothesis (video condition 2 & 3). Video condition 2, where the manager was verbally aggressive but was not nonverbally immediate; and video condition 3, where the manager was not verbally aggressive, but was nonverbally immediate, the results are as follows: $F(3, 401) = 41.62, p < .001$. For the purpose of testing the hypothesis, the results of the one-way ANOVA shows that for the dependent variable of character, the mean for video condition 3 was found to be significantly higher than the mean for video condition 2, there was a mean difference of 7.00 ($p < .001$) (for mean comparisons see Table 6 in Appendix A). According to these findings participants within this experiment saw the manager in video condition 3, where the manager was not verbally aggressive, and used nonverbal immediacy behaviors, as being significantly higher in character (trustworthiness) when compared to video condition 2, where the manager was viewed not using nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but was viewed using verbally aggressive messages. Therefore, the manager who uses nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but does not use verbally aggressive messages, will be perceived as having a significantly higher character, or as being significantly more trustworthy, when compared to the manager who
does not use nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but does use verbally aggressive messages; supporting the hypothesis.

In further comparing the means between the four video conditions, it provides an even deeper understanding of this interaction. According to the mean scores provided by the one-way ANOVA the condition that yielded the highest perceptions of character (trustworthiness) was video condition 3, where nonverbal immediacy (NVI) was used, and verbal aggression (VA) was not used (M = 25.63). As mentioned above, this finding supports the stated hypothesis. This finding indicates that the manager who uses nonverbally immediate behaviors and who does not use verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being higher in character, more trustworthy, than any of the other video conditions discussed below. Video condition 4 (did not use NVI/did not use VA) yielded the second highest perceptions of character (M = 21.24). Video condition 2 (did not use NVI/used VA) generated the third highest perceptions of character (M = 18.63). Video condition 1 (used NVI/used VA) yielded the forth, and least highest perceptions of character among the four experimental conditions (M = 17.93). These findings suggest that the manager who uses nonverbally immediate behaviors and who does not use verbally aggressive messages while communicating will be perceived as possessing the highest levels of character (trustworthiness), and the manager who uses nonverbally immediate behaviors, and who uses verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as having the lowest levels of perceived character, or as being the least trustworthy (for mean comparisons see Table 6 in Appendix A).
Dependent Variable: Caring (Goodwill)

For the dependent variable of caring (goodwill) results indicated a significant main effect when considering a manager’s use/a managers non use of verbally aggressive messages, $F(3, 402) = 122.91, p < .001$, partial eta-squared = .23. This finding indicates that a manager will be perceived significantly different in terms of the dependent variable of caring when seen using/not using verbally aggressive messages. This finding also indicates that the manager who uses verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being significantly less caring, or as possessing significantly less goodwill toward others, than the manager who does not use verbally aggressive messages (see Table 3 in Appendix A). A significant main effect was also found for a managers use/non-use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors, $F(3, 402) = 89.26, p < .001$, partial eta-squared = .18. This shows that a manager who is nonverbally immediate will be perceived significantly different when considering perceived level of caring than a manager who is not nonverbally immediate. The results also show that participants found the manager who was observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors as being significantly more caring than the manager who was observed not using nonverbal immediacy behaviors within the video conditions (see Table 4 in Appendix A).

Furthermore, a significant interaction effect was observed for perceptions of the manager’s level of caring concerning the interaction of the two independent variables (verbally aggressive messages/nonverbal immediacy behaviors), $F(3, 402) = 79.89, p < .001$, partial eta-squared = .16. The results of this interaction indicate that the use of both verbally aggressive messages and nonverbal immediacy used by a manager will interact to create significantly different perceptions of the manager’s level of caring. This finding
shows that a manager who is observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors, and not using verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being significantly more caring than any of the other 3 video conditions (see Table 7 in Appendix A).

In further understanding this interaction, results of a one-way ANOVA comparing the means between the four video conditions revealed a significant difference between the two video conditions being compared in order to test the hypothesis (video condition 2 & 3). Video condition 2, where the manager was verbally aggressive but was not nonverbally immediate; and video condition 3, where the manager was not verbally aggressive, but was nonverbally immediate, the results are as follows: $F(3, 402) = 97.54, p < .001$. The results of the one-way ANOVA further shows that for the dependent variable of caring, the mean for condition 3 was found to be significantly higher than condition 2, there was a mean difference of 16.28 ($p < .001$) (for mean comparisons see Table 7 in Appendix A). These results indicate that participants perceived the manager in video condition 3, where the manager was not verbally aggressive, and used nonverbal immediacy behaviors, as being significantly higher in perceived caring, or as possessing significantly more goodwill towards others, when compared to video condition 2, where the manager was viewed not using nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but was viewed using verbally aggressive messages. These findings show that the manager who uses nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but does not use verbally aggressive messages, will be perceived as being significantly more caring when compared to the manager who does not use nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but does use verbally aggressive messages, supporting the hypothesis.
In further comparing the means between the four video conditions, it provides an even deeper understanding of this interaction. According to the mean scores provided by the one-way ANOVA the condition that yielded the highest perceptions of caring (goodwill) was video condition 3, where nonverbal immediacy (NVI) was used, and verbal aggression (VA) was not used (M = 34.11). As mentioned above, this finding supports the stated hypothesis. This finding indicates that the manager who uses nonverbally immediate behaviors and who does not use verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being more caring, significantly higher in perceptions of goodwill, than any of the other video conditions discussed below. Video condition 4 (did not use NVI/did not use VA) yielded the second highest perceptions of caring (M = 19.53). Video condition 1 (used NVI/used VA) yielded the third highest perceptions of caring among the four experimental conditions (M = 18.23). Video condition 2 (did not use NVI/used VA) generated the fourth and least highest perceptions of caring (M = 17.83). These findings suggest that the manager who uses nonverbally immediate behaviors and does not use verbally aggressive messages while communicating will be perceived as possessing the highest levels of caring (goodwill), and the manager who does not use nonverbally immediate behaviors, and who does use verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as having the lowest levels of perceived caring, or as the manager who possesses the least amount of goodwill towards others (for mean comparisons see Table 7 in Appendix A).

Dependent Variable: Relaxed Communicator Style

Concerning the first communicator style dependent variable, results indicated a significant main effect for the relaxed dimension of communicator style when
considering a manager’s use/a managers non-use of verbally aggressive messages, $F(3, 396) = 56.42, \ p < .001$, partial eta-squared = .12. This finding shows that a manager’s perceived level of the relaxed dimension of communicator style will be influenced by the managers use of verbally aggressive messages. Moreover, this finding further shows that a manager who uses verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being a significantly less relaxed communicator, than the manager who does not use verbally aggressive messages (see Table 3 in Appendix A). A significant main effect was also found for perceived level of the relaxed dimension of communicator style when looking at a managers use/non use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors, $F(3, 396) = 25.05, \ p < .001$, partial eta-squared = .06. Thus a manager’s use/non use of nonverbal immediacy significantly influences perceptions of the managers perceived level of the relaxed communicator style dependent variable. This finding shows that a manager who is nonverbally immediate will be perceived as being a significantly more relaxed communicator, than the manager who does not use nonverbal immediacy behaviors (see Table 4 in Appendix A).

A significant interaction effect was observed for the dependent variable of relaxed communicator style regarding the interaction of the two independent variables (verbally aggressive messages/nonverbal immediacy behaviors), $F(3, 396) = 22.29, \ p < .001$, partial eta-squared = .05. These results reveal that the use of verbally aggressive messages and nonverbally immediate behaviors have the ability to create significantly different perceptions of the manager’s relaxed communication style. These results show that a manager who uses nonverbal immediacy behaviors, and does not use verbally aggressive messages, will be perceived as being a significantly more relaxed
communicator when compared the a manager who is not nonverbally immediate, but does use verbally aggressive messages (see Table 8 in Appendix A).

Results of a one-way ANOVA comparing the means between the four video conditions provided further understanding of this interaction, and revealed a significant difference between the two video conditions being compared in order to test the hypothesis (video condition 2 & 3). Video condition 2, where the manager was verbally aggressive but was not nonverbally immediate; and video condition 3, where the manager was not verbally aggressive, but was nonverbally immediate, the results are as follows: $F(3, 406) = 35.40, p < .001$. The results of a one-way ANOVA further shows that for the dependent variable of relaxed communicator style, the mean for video condition 3 was found to be significantly higher than condition 2, there was a mean difference of 5.60 ($p < .001$) (for mean comparisons see Table 8 in Appendix A). Thus, participants found the manager in video condition 3 (where the manager was not verbally aggressive, but was nonverbally immediate) as being a significantly more relaxed communicator than the manager in video condition 2 (where the manager was verbally aggressive, but was not nonverbally immediate). This finding implies that managers who use nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but do not use verbally aggressive messages, will be perceived as being a significantly more relaxed communicator, than a manager who does not use nonverbal immediacy behaviors but does use verbally aggressive messages, supporting the hypothesis.

In further comparing the means between the four video conditions, it provides an even deeper understanding of this interaction. According to the mean scores provided by the one-way ANOVA the condition that yielded the highest perceptions of the relaxed
dimension of communicator style was video condition 3, where nonverbal immediacy (NVI) was used, and verbal aggression (VA) was not used (M = 18.13). As mentioned above, this finding supports the stated hypothesis. This finding indicates that the manager who uses nonverbally immediate behaviors and who does not use verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being a more relaxed communicator, than any of the other video conditions discussed below. Video condition 4 (did not use NVI/did not use VA) yielded the second highest perceptions of the relaxed dimension of communicator style (M = 17.89). Video condition 1 (used NVI/used VA) yielded the third highest perceptions of the relaxed dimension of communicator style among the four experimental conditions (M = 17.00). Video condition 2 (did not use NVI/used VA) generated the forth and least highest perceptions of the relaxed dimension of communicator style (M = 12.53). These findings suggest that the manager who uses nonverbally immediate behaviors and does not use verbally aggressive messages while communicating will be perceived as possessing the most relaxed communicator style, and the manager who does not use nonverbally immediate behaviors, and who does use verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being the least relaxed communicator (for mean comparisons see Table 8 in Appendix A).

**Dependent Variable: Friendly Communicator Style**

For the friendly communicator style dependent variable, a significant main effect was observed concerning a manager’s use/a managers non-use of verbally aggressive messages, \( F(3, 396) = 141.70, p < .001, \text{ partial eta-squared} = .26 \). These findings suggest that perceptions of a manager’s friendly communicator style will be perceived as being significantly different depending on whether or not the manager uses/does not use
verbally aggressive messages. The results also indicate that the manager who uses verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being significantly less friendly than the manager who does not use verbally aggressive messages (see Table 3 in Appendix A). Additionally, a significant main effect was observed for a manager’s use/non use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors, \( F(3, 396) = 141.30, p < .001, \) partial \( \eta^2 = .26. \) These results show that perceptions of a manager’s friendly communicator style will be perceived as being significantly different depending on whether or not the manager is observed using/not using positive nonverbally immediate behaviors. This finding showed that a manager who was observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors was perceived as being a significantly friendlier communicator than the manager who was observed not using nonverbal immediacy behaviors within the video conditions (see Table 4 in Appendix A).

A significant interaction effect for the friendly communicator style dependent variable was found concerning the interaction of the two independent variables (verbally aggressive messages/nonverbal immediacy behaviors), \( F(3, 396) = 81.04, p < .001, \) partial \( \eta^2 = .17 \) was also observed. These results suggest that a manager’s use of verbally aggressive messages, and a manager’s use of nonverbal immediacy interact to create significantly different perceptions of the manager’s friendly communicator style. This result shows that a manager who is observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors, and not using verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being significantly friendlier than any of the other 3 video conditions (see Table 9 in Appendix A).

Results of a one-way ANOVA comparing the means between the four video conditions provided further understanding of this interaction, and revealed a significant
difference between the two video conditions being compared in order to test the hypothesis (video condition 4 & 5). Video condition 2, where the manager was verbally aggressive but was not nonverbally immediate and video condition 3, where the manager was not verbally aggressive, but was nonverbally immediate), results are as follows: $F (3, 402) = 126.77, p < .001)$. The results of the one-way ANOVA further shows that for the friendly dimension of communicator style, the mean for video condition 3 was found to be significantly higher than condition 2, there was a mean difference of 9.50 ($p < .001$) (for mean comparisons see Table 9 in Appendix A). Thus, participants found the manager in video condition 3 (where the manager was not verbally aggressive, but was nonverbally immediate) as being a significantly friendlier communicator than the manager in video condition 2 (where the manager was verbally aggressive, but was not nonverbally immediate). This finding implies that managers will be perceived as being significantly friendlier, if they are nonverbally immediate, and do not use verbally aggressive messages. Thus, the manager who uses nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but does not use verbally aggressive messages, will be perceived as being a significantly friendlier communicator when compared to the manager who does not use nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but does use verbally aggressive messages, supporting the hypothesis.

In further comparing the means between the four video conditions, it provides an even deeper understanding of this interaction. According to the mean scores provided by the one-way ANOVA the condition that yielded the highest perceptions of the friendly dimension of communicator style was video condition 3, where nonverbal immediacy (NVI) was used, and verbal aggression (VA) was not used ($M = 16.00$). As mentioned
above, this finding supports the stated hypothesis. This finding indicates that the manager who uses nonverbally immediate behaviors and who does not use verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being a friendlier communicator, than any of the other video conditions discussed below. Video condition 4 (did not use NVI/did not use VA) yielded the second highest perceptions of the relaxed dimension of communicator style (M = 7.66). Video condition 1 (used NVI/used VA) yielded the third highest perceptions of the relaxed dimension of communicator style among the four experimental conditions (M = 7.59). Video condition 2 (did not use NVI/used VA) generated the fourth and least highest perceptions of the friendly dimension of communicator style (M = 6.50). These findings suggest that the manager who uses nonverbally immediate behaviors and does not use verbally aggressive messages while communicating will be perceived as possessing the most friendly communicator style, and the manager who does not use nonverbally immediate behaviors, and who does use verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being the least friendly communicator (for mean comparisons see Table 9 in Appendix A).

*Dependent Variable: Attentive Communicator Style*

Finally a significant main effect for the attentive communicator style concerning a manager’s use/a managers non-use of verbally aggressive messages, $F (3, 396) = 80.39, p < .001$, partial eta-squared = .17 was observed. According to these results, perceptions of a manager’s attentive communicator style will be perceived as significantly different when comparing the manager’s use/non-use of verbally aggressive messages. According to this finding, a manager who uses verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being a significantly less attentive communicator, than a manager who does not use
verbally aggressive messages (see Table 3 in Appendix A). A significant main effect was also observed for a managers use/non use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors, $F(3, 396) = 56.49, p < .001$, partial eta-squared = .12. These results show that a manager’s attentive communicator style will be perceived as significantly different whether a manager is nonverbally immediate or is not nonverbally immediate. This result shows that the manager who was observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors was perceived to be a significantly more attentive communicator, than the manager who was observed not using nonverbal immediacy behaviors within the video conditions (see Table 4 in Appendix A).

Results further indicated a significant interaction effect for the attentive dimension of communicator style regarding the interaction of the two independent variables (verbally aggressive messages/nonverbal immediacy behaviors), $F(3, 396) = 16.87, p < .001$, partial eta-squared = .04. These results indicate that the use of both verbally aggressive messages and nonverbal immediacy will interact to create significantly different perceptions of a manager’s attentive communicator style. This finding indicates that a manager who is observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors, and not using verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being a significantly more attentive communicator, than any of the other 3 video conditions (for mean comparisons see Table 10 in Appendix A).

Results of a one-way ANOVA comparing the means between the four video conditions provided further understanding of this interaction, and revealed a significant difference between the two video conditions being compared in order to test the hypothesis (video condition 2 & 3). Video condition 2, where the manager was verbally aggressive but was not nonverbally immediate and video condition 3, where the manager
was not verbally aggressive, but was nonverbally immediate, the results are as follows: $F (3, 401) = 52.76, p < .001)$. The results of a one-way ANOVA further shows that for the dependent variable of the attentive dimension of communicator style, the mean for video condition 3 was found to be significantly higher than condition 2, there was a mean difference of 6.90 ($p < .001$) (for mean comparisons see Table 10 in Appendix A). According to these results, participants saw the manager in video condition 3 (where the manager was not verbally aggressive, but was nonverbally immediate) as being a significantly more attentive communicator when compared to video condition 2 (where the manager was verbally aggressive, but was not nonverbally immediate). Therefore, the manager who uses nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but does not use verbally aggressive messages, will be perceived as being a significantly more attentive communicator, when compared to the manager who does not use nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but does use verbally aggressive messages, supporting the hypothesis.

In further comparing the means between the four video conditions, it provides an even deeper understanding of this interaction. According to the mean scores provided by the one-way ANOVA the condition that yielded the highest perceptions of the attentive dimension of communicator style was video condition 3, where nonverbal immediacy (NVI) was used, and verbal aggression (VA) was not used (M = 14.56). As mentioned above, this finding supports the stated hypothesis. This finding indicates that the manager who uses nonverbally immediate behaviors and who does not use verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being a more attentive communicator, than any of the other video conditions discussed below. Video condition 4 (did not use NVI/did not use VA) yielded the second highest perceptions of the attentive dimension of communicator style
(M = 9.64). Video condition 1 (used NVI/used VA) yielded the third highest perceptions of the attentive dimension of communicator style among the four experimental conditions (M = 9.06). Video condition 2 (did not use NVI/used VA) generated the forth and least highest perceptions of the attentive dimension of communicator style (M = 7.66). These findings suggest that the manager who uses nonverbally immediate behaviors and does not use verbally aggressive messages while communicating will be perceived as possessing the most attentive communicator style, and the manager who does not use nonverbally immediate behaviors, and who does use verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being the least attentive communicator (for mean comparisons see Table 10 in Appendix A).
The purpose of this study was stated within a single hypothesis and aimed to further our understanding of the destructive nature and consequences of verbally aggressive behaviors. Additionally, the study sought to create a better understanding of the benefits, as well as the positive and constructive nature of nonverbal immediacy behaviors. These behaviors were investigated in order to better understand their role in the creating of both positive and negative perceptions regarding superior-subordinate communication. More specifically, this study sought to explore how a manager’s use of verbal aggression and nonverbal immediacy impact perceptions of that manager’s competence (intelligence/practical wisdom), character (trustworthiness), caring (goodwill), and the relaxed, friendly, and attentive dimensions of communicator style.

Dominic Infante and Charles Wigley originally conceptualized verbal aggressiveness, and its concomitant behavior, verbal aggression, in 1986. Since that time, there has been an abundance of research supporting the notion that verbal aggression can be destructive within the organizational context, specifically when involving verbal aggression in everyday interactions between superiors and their subordinates (Gorden, et al., 1988; Gorden, et al., 1988; Infante & Gorden, 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991). This study adds to this body of research by showing that verbally aggressive messages, when used by a manager, create significantly lower perceptions of a manager’s
competence, character, and caring. The findings of this thesis further shows that a manager who uses verbally aggressive behaviors will be perceived as being a significantly less relaxed, friendly, and attentive communicator as compared to a manager who does not use verbally aggressive messages.

When verbally aggressive messages were viewed within the video conditions, those aggressive behaviors consistently impacted perceptions of the dependent variables negatively. When the manager was viewed using verbally aggressive messages (video condition 1 & 2), the manager was perceived as being the least competent, of the lowest character, as being the least caring, and as possessing the least relaxed, friendly and attentive communicator style when comparing all four video conditions together. This finding was found to be the case, even when accompanied with a behavior that has been shown to create positive perceptual outcomes (i.e., nonverbal immediacy).

A notable finding from the analysis was found when nonverbal immediacy accompanied the verbally aggressive behaviors viewed within video conditions 1 & 2. The mean for competence and character was found to be negatively impacted (lower) in video condition 1 (Used NVI/Used VA) when compared to video condition 2 (Did not use NVI/Used VA). This finding suggests that a manager who is verbally aggressive would benefit from refraining from using nonverbally immediate behaviors if said manager wishes to be viewed as more competent and of a higher character (more trustworthy). However, if the verbally aggressive manager in question is seeking to be viewed as more caring, and as possessing a more relaxed, friendly, and attentive communicator style, the findings of this experiment suggests that the manager in question would benefit from using nonverbal immediacy behaviors.
It was found that when nonverbal immediacy behaviors accompanied verbal aggression, the use of nonverbal immediacy positively influenced the negative impact verbal aggression had on perceptions of caring, as well as, perceptions of the relaxed, friendly, and attentive dimensions of communicator style. Thus the verbally aggressive manager who seeks to be perceived more caring, and as possessing a more relaxed, friendly, and attentive communicator style should use nonverbally immediate behaviors even if they cannot refrain from using verbally aggressive behaviors.

Just as in the case with verbal aggression, immediacy behaviors, including both verbal and nonverbal immediacy, have also received a great deal of attention over the last half-century within the field of communication studies. In general, previous research has revealed that communicators who engage in immediacy behaviors are perceived more positively than communicators who do not engage in immediacy behaviors (Richmond, et al., 2003).

The findings of this thesis further add to our understanding of the positive influence nonverbal immediacy behaviors have toward creating positive perceptions and communication/relational outcomes. The findings of this study reveal that a manager who communicates using nonverbally immediate behaviors and who does not use verbally aggressive messages will be perceived as being significantly higher in character, seen as significantly more caring, and as a significantly more relaxed, friendly, and attentive communicator as compared to a manager who does not use nonverbally immediate behaviors.

The only dependent variable that was not significantly influenced by the manager’s use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors was the dependent variable of
competence. The manager who was observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors was not perceived to be significantly more or significantly less competent than the manager who was observed not using nonverbal immediacy behaviors when comparing the four video conditions. As an explanation for the aforementioned finding, it may be that specifically in the case of perceptions of a supervisor’s competence, words may speak louder than actions. That is, what a supervisor/manager says to his or her subordinates/employees may be more meaningful or involving than how it is delivered.

According to a recent study by Santelli, Miller, and Katt (2011), a positive relationship was found between perceived instructor nonverbal immediacy and all of the dimensions that make up the source credibility construct (competence, character, and caring) among student participants. Research has consistently identified a positive relationship between nonverbal immediacy behaviors and perceived source credibility (Johnson & Miller, 2002; Schrodt & Witt, 2006; Schrodt et al., 2009; Teven & Hanson, 2004). In fact, many scholars argue that immediacy is the behavior that is most frequently associated with credibility (McCroskey & Teven, 1999; McCroskey & Young, 1981; Teven & McCroskey, 1997). Although immediacy has received a great deal of attention over the last half-century, this attention has primarily concentrated on the positive influence immediacy holds within a classroom setting, as well as the impact it has on various student perceptions (see: Andersen, 1979; Baker, 2010; Chesebro, 2003; Chesebro & McCroskey, 2001; Christophel, 1990; Christophel & Gorham, 1995; Frymier, 1993, 1994; Frymier & Shulman, 1995; Jaasma & Koper, 1999; Kearney, Plax, Smith, & Sorensen, 1988; Kelly & Gorham, 1988; McCroskey, Sallinen, Fayer, Richmond, & Barraclough, 1996; Plax, Kearney, McCroskey, & Richmond, 1986; Pogue
& AhYun, 2006; Richmond, 1990; Richmond, Gorham, & McCroskey, 1987; Santilli et al., 2011; Scrodt & Witt, 2006; Scrodt et al., 2009; Schutt et al., 2009; Teven & McCroskey, 1997; Titsworth, 2001; Witt & Wheeless, 2001; Witt, Wheeless & Allen, 2004).

Within studies seeking to understand the relationship nonverbal immediacy holds towards creating positive perceptions of a teacher’s competence, it could very well be that these perceptions have already been established and solidified within the students’ perceptions. It could be that college students, who may possess little knowledge of the material being presented to them by the teacher, are not as influenced by the teacher’s nonverbal behavior. Thus it could be that students are more influenced by the teacher’s competence itself (i.e., a deep understanding of the material they lecture/present to students). Since the superior-subordinate relationship in several ways mirrors the teacher-student relationship, these speculations may generalize to the organizational context as well.

In addition to the findings discussed above, the results of the analysis revealed several interaction effects regarding the manager’s nonverbal immediacy behaviors and their use of verbally aggressive messages. Within this study, video condition 3 produced the most favorable outcome. In video condition 3, the manager was observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors, but was not observed using verbally aggressive messages. It was this video condition that had the highest means for competence, character, caring, and the relaxed, friendly, and attentive communicator styles. These findings suggest that a manager will be perceived as being significantly more competent (intelligent /as possessing practical wisdom), as possessing significantly higher character.
(trustworthiness), as being significantly more caring (possessing significantly more goodwill), and as a significantly more relaxed, friendly, and attentive communicator. This finding suggests that a manager should be trained to use nonverbal immediacy behaviors such as smaller proxemic distances, the use of touch, eye contact, positive facial expressions, positive head nods, increases in gestures, relaxed body position, purposeful body movements, positive orientation of the body and head, and vocal expressiveness (Andersen, et al., 1979). The manager should also be trained to refrain from using verbally aggressive messages, such as character, competence, and background attacks, physical appearance attacks, messages of ridicule, threats, the use of profanity, maledictions (“curses” or “jinxes”), teasing, and nonverbal emblems (i.e., displaying insulting gestures with the hands and/or body) during everyday communicative interactions (Infante & Rancer, 1996).

The implications for this study clearly show that managers who have personalities that predispose them to being verbally aggressive, and who are more likely to use verbally aggressive messages to communicate during every day interactions within the organization setting, would profit from being trained to be less verbally aggressive and more nonverbally immediate. Rancer, et al. (1997) have developed a training program designed to enhance students’ argumentative motivation and skill with the goal of reducing verbal aggressiveness. Infante (1995) recommended several avenues to help students understand and control verbal aggression in the classroom. A similar program specifically designed to reduce their verbal aggressiveness and verbally aggressive behavior should be developed and implemented in organizations and designed specifically for managers.
As suggested by Richmond and McCroskey (1992), findings that suggest nonverbal immediacy behaviors are purely personality based and cannot be changed is relatively meaningless. Fortunately, a number of studies have found that an individual’s nonverbal behavior is subject to change through proper training programs. Much of the research investigating the training of nonverbal immediacy behaviors has found that these positive behaviors can be improved upon through the use of training (Nussbaum, 1984; Richmond, & McCroskey, 2004). This research shows that individuals who are trained to be more nonverbally immediate will be perceived more positively (Burroughs, 2007), and the findings within this thesis clearly add to this body of research.

Limitations of the Study

A few limitations of the extant study should be mentioned. The first limitation concerns the video stimuli used for the experiment. Specifically, in the video condition where the manager was observed using verbally aggressive messages, but did not employ nonverbal immediacy behaviors (video condition 2; see p. 60 for definition of video conditions), different camera shots were inadvertently recorded for video condition 2 than in the recording for the video condition where the manager did not use verbally aggressive messages and did not use nonverbal immediacy (video condition 4; see p. 60 for definition of video condition). Subtle, yet observable, differences between the two videos are seen after the employee walks into the scene, near the beginning of the two videos, and sits down. In video condition 2, where the manager used verbally aggressive messages but did not use nonverbal immediacy behaviors, the camera zooms in on the manager and the employee is not seen from that shot on. However, in video condition 4, where the manager was not observed using verbally aggressive messages and was not
observed using nonverbal immediacy behaviors, the camera remained zoomed out and the employee remained visible in the much wider shot for the duration of the video. Thus, it is possible that the closer or “zoomed in” shot of the manager may have had an influence on the way that participants’ perceived the manager’s behaviors. Since the participants’ were able to see the manager’s facial expressions more closely in video condition 2 and not in video condition 4, it may have influenced participant’s overall perceptions of the manager differentially.

Another limitation that should be noted concerns the way the 573 students (158 for study I: The Manipulation Check/415 for study II: The Experiment) were recruited for the study. Student participants were recruited through the use of a convenience sample and then were randomly assigned to the different treatment conditions via intact classes. Future studies should attempt to utilize a true random sampling of participants. The student participants utilized in the current study were randomly assigned via intact classes and not via individual participant, which requires the author to suggest that this study was a quasi-experiment, and not a true experiment. Although randomly assigned intact classes were used rather than pure random selection and random assignment of each participant, it is not believed that this was a limitation that preempts the validity of the study. This is suggested because as part of the final survey, participants were asked to report their ACT/SAT scores. This was done to test the assumption that participants “academic preparation” as measured by these ACT/SAT scores would not differ between subjects who received the four different video conditions. To test this speculation, a one-way ANOVA was conducted between the four groups with the dependent variable(s) of ACT/SAT scores. Results of a one-way ANOVA showed no significant differences.
between the distribution of students in the four video treatment conditions based on their ACT/SAT standardized testing scores, $F (3, 289) = .506, p > .05$, partial eta-squared = .00.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

There has been much research that has consistently identified a positive relationship between nonverbal immediacy behaviors and positive perceptions of source credibility (including the competence, character, and caring dimensions of source credibility) (Johnson & Miller, 2002; Schrodt & Witt, 2006; Schrodt et al., 2009; Teven & Hanson, 2004). According to this study, there was no significant difference in perceived competence between the manager who was observed using nonverbal immediacy and the manager who did not use nonverbal immediacy. Although already suggested in the case of perceived competence it could be that “words speak louder than actions”. As such, linguistic discourse, or the use of spoken language within a communicative setting may serve as a much better predictor of perceived competence than nonverbal immediacy behaviors alone, especially regarding perceptions of a supervisor’s competence. However, this speculation awaits empirical scrutiny.

In the present study, immediacy was manipulated via the use or non-use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors. However, immediacy contains a verbal component as well (Gorham, 1988; Mehrabian, 1981). Verbal immediacy behaviors were not examined in this experiment. Thus, future research should introduce verbal immediacy as an independent variable, not only to investigate its influence on perceptions of competence,
but also to examine how verbal immediacy influences perceptions of character, perceived caring, and perceptions of the relaxed, friendly, and attentive dimensions of communicator style.

Additionally, future research should investigate perceptions of an older demographic than the demographic used within this study. Although ages for the current study ranged from 18 – 59, the mean age was 21.70 ($SD = 5.69$). Research by Schullery and Schullery (2003) found that trait argumentativeness decreases with age. The results of their study looking at the relationship of argumentativeness to age, found that females reported as having a constant trait argumentativeness level until around the age of 35, followed by an accelerating decline. The results of their study further found that males in contrast had the most rapid decline in level of trait argumentativeness during their younger ages, and then gradually leveling off around the age of 45. Although Schullery and Schullery (2003) did not test verbal aggressiveness, this companion aggressive communication trait might function in the same manner. In light of this, it could be hypothesized that trait verbal aggressiveness could be negatively correlated with age; as the individual ages, level of trait verbal aggressiveness decreases. Again, this speculation awaits empirical scrutiny.

Future research should also investigate trait argumentativeness as an independent variable. This line of research should investigate how trait argumentativeness and the use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors influences perceptions of various dependent variables including; perceptions of source credibility (competence, character, and caring), and the relaxed, friendly, and attentive communicator styles. Studies by Infante, Rancer, and Jordan (1996), Rancer, Jordan-Jackson, and Infante, (2003), and Jordan-Jackson, Lin,
Rancer, and Infante (2008), found that when a communicator within a conflict (argumentative) situation uses an affirming communicating style, these individuals will be perceived as being more friendly, relaxed, and attentive communicators as compared to when a non-affirming communicator style was used. Future research should investigate how nonverbal immediacy behaviors when used concomitantly with argumentative communication behaviors influences perceptions of a supervisor. This line of research should seek to better understand if a positive behavior that has been found to create positive perceptions and relational outcomes, such as nonverbal immediacy behavior and argumentative communication influences the competence, character, and caring dimensions of source credibility, and the friendly, relaxed, and attentive communicator style.

In addition to the aforementioned future research, scholars should investigate how nonverbal immediacy behaviors influence perceptions of verbal aggression in regards to the competence and character dimensions of source credibility. Within the current study, when nonverbal immediacy accompanied the verbally aggressive behaviors, the mean for competence and character was found to be negatively impacted (lower) in video condition 1 (Used NVI/Used VA) when compared to video condition 2 (Did not use NVI/Used VA). This finding suggests that a manager who is verbally aggressive would benefit from refraining from using nonverbally immediate behaviors if said manager wishes to be viewed as more competent and of a higher character (more trustworthy). Future research should seek to better understand this relationship and further investigate the impact nonverbal immediacy has regarding perceptions of verbally aggressive behaviors.
Finally, the results of this study suggest that the use of verbally aggressive messages and nonverbal immediacy significantly influence perceptions of the relaxed, friendly, and attentive communicator styles. Future research should also investigate communicator style, and how the use of independent variables, such as the ones investigated within this study (verbal aggression/nonverbal immediacy) and various other communication traits influences perceptions of other, additional, communicator styles dimensions, such as animated, dramatic, contentious, dominant, impression leaving, communicator image, and open.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

FIGURES & TABLES
Figure 1: Cognitive Valence Theory Model
Table 1: Pearson’s Correlation (Source Credibility)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Competence</th>
<th>Character</th>
<th>CARING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.729**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.729**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.555**</td>
<td>.696**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>403</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2: Pearson’s Correlation (Affirming Communicator Style)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Relaxed</th>
<th>Friendly</th>
<th>Attentive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.377**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.377**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentive</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.455**</td>
<td>.744**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>402</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Table 3: Main Effect Means in Relation to Superiors’ Verbally Aggressive Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Verbal Aggression Used</th>
<th>Verbal Aggression Not Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competence*</td>
<td>19.75 (6.09)</td>
<td>24.39 (6.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character*</td>
<td>18.32 (5.05)</td>
<td>23.43 (6.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring*</td>
<td>18.03 (7.73)</td>
<td>26.85 (10.93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed*</td>
<td>14.67 (4.86)</td>
<td>18.06 (4.55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly*</td>
<td>7.07 (3.97)</td>
<td>11.93 (5.79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentive*</td>
<td>8.31 (4.11)</td>
<td>12.15 (4.93)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Standard Deviations are in parentheses
*p < .001

Table 4: Main Effect Means in Relation to Superiors’ Nonverbal Immediacy Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Nonverbal Immediacy Used</th>
<th>Nonverbal Immediacy Not Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>21.96 (6.72)</td>
<td>22.17 (6.61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character*</td>
<td>21.84 (6.76)</td>
<td>19.88 (5.38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring*</td>
<td>26.05 (11.73)</td>
<td>18.68 (7.21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed*</td>
<td>17.51 (4.43)</td>
<td>15.21 (5.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly*</td>
<td>11.91 (6.04)</td>
<td>7.07 (3.57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentive*</td>
<td>11.84 (5.10)</td>
<td>8.61 (4.16)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Standard Deviations are in parentheses
*p < .001
### Table 5: Means for one-way ANOVA:
**Dependent variable - Competence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video Condition</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 1 (Used NVI/Used VA)</td>
<td>18.70</td>
<td>(5.80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 2 (Did not use NVI/Used VA)</td>
<td>20.95</td>
<td>(6.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 3 (Used NVI/Did not use VA)</td>
<td>25.39</td>
<td>(5.77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 4 (Did not use NVI/Did not use VA)</td>
<td>23.26</td>
<td>(6.97)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Standard Deviations are in parentheses*

*For definition of video conditions see p. 60*

### Table 6: Means for one-way ANOVA:
**Dependent variable - Character (Trustworthiness)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video Condition</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 1 (Used NVI/Used VA)</td>
<td>17.93</td>
<td>(5.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 2 (Did not use NVI/Used VA)</td>
<td>18.63</td>
<td>(4.84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 3 (Used NVI/Did not use VA)</td>
<td>25.63</td>
<td>(5.92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 4 (Did not use NVI/Did not use VA)</td>
<td>21.24</td>
<td>(5.65)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Standard Deviations are in parentheses*

*For definition of video conditions see p. 60*

### Table 7: Means for one-way ANOVA:
**Dependent variable – Caring (Goodwill)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video Condition</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 1 (Used NVI/Used VA)</td>
<td>18.23</td>
<td>(8.62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 2 (Did not use NVI/Used VA)</td>
<td>17.83</td>
<td>(6.72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 3 (Used NVI/Did not use VA)</td>
<td>34.11</td>
<td>(8.66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 4 (Did not use NVI/Did not use VA)</td>
<td>19.53</td>
<td>(7.61)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Standard Deviations are in parentheses*

*For definition of video conditions see p. 60*
Table 8: Means for one-way ANOVA:
Dependent variable - Relaxed Communicator Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video Condition</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 1 (Used NVI/Used VA)</td>
<td>17.00 (4.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 2 (Did not use NVI/Used VA)</td>
<td>12.53 (4.56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 3 (Used NVI/Did not use VA)</td>
<td>18.13 (4.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 4 (Did not use NVI/Did not use VA)</td>
<td>17.89 (4.40)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standard Deviations are in parentheses
*For definition of video conditions see p. 60

Table 9: Means for one-way ANOVA:
Dependent variable - Friendly Communicator Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video Condition</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 1 (Used NVI/Used VA)</td>
<td>7.59 (4.23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 2 (Did not use NVI/Used VA)</td>
<td>6.50 (3.56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 3 (Used NVI/Did not use VA)</td>
<td>16.00 (4.43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 4 (Did not use NVI/Did not use VA)</td>
<td>7.66 (3.50)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standard Deviations are in parentheses
*For definition of video conditions see p. 60

Table 10: Means for one-way ANOVA:
Dependent variable - Attentive Communicator Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video Condition</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 1 (Used NVI/Used VA)</td>
<td>9.06 (4.23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 2 (Did not use NVI/Used VA)</td>
<td>7.66 (3.94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 3 (Used NVI/Did not use VA)</td>
<td>14.56 (4.40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Condition 4 (Did not use NVI/Did not use VA)</td>
<td>9.64 (4.15)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standard Deviations are in parentheses
*For definition of video conditions see p. 60
APPENDIX B

IRB APPROVAL (INFORMED CONSENT)

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Project:

Title of Study: Do actions really speak louder than words? Investigating the effects of nonverbal immediacy and verbal aggression on perceptions of a manager’s credibility, caring, and communicator style.

Introduction: This study seeks to understand how a manager’s use of nonverbal immediacy and verbal aggression influence participant’s perceptions of the manager’s credibility, caring, and communicator style.

Today you are invited to participate in this study, which is being conducted by Joe E. Lybarger, a graduate student in The School of Communication at The University of Akron.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to help the researcher fulfill the Thesis requirement for the Masters of Arts degree; second, to advance the field of communication.

Procedures: In agreeing to participate in this project you will be asked to watch a short video and complete a questionnaire, no other participation is required.

Risks and Discomforts: There are no risks/discomforts associated with participating in this study.

Benefits: You will receive no direct benefit from your participation in this study, however, your participation may help to better understand the phenomenon being examined.

Right to refuse or withdraw: Your participation is voluntary, if at any time you feel you are unable to complete your participation in this study, you are free to stop and leave.

Anonymous and Confidential Data Collection: In order to ensure anonymity do not put your name on this survey or identify yourself in anyway.

Any information collected will be kept in a secure location and only the researcher will have access to the data. Participants will not be individually identified in any publication or presentation of the research results. Only aggregate data will be used. Nobody will be able to link your responses to you.

Who to contact with questions: If you have any questions about this study, you may call Joe E. Lybarger at 330-972-7600 or Dr. Andrew Rancer, Professor at the School of Communication at 330-972-7600. This project has been reviewed and approved by The University of Akron Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call Sharon McWhorter, Director for The office of Research Administration at 330-972-7666.

Acceptance: I have read the information provided above and all of my questions have been answered. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. My completion and return of this questionnaire will serve as my consent. I have been given a copy of this consent form for future reference.

APPROVED

Date 2/05/16
APPENDIX C

SCRIPTS FOR FOUR VIDEO CONDITIONS

Script for video condition 1: (Verbal Aggression Used – Nonverbal Immediacy Used)

**Situation:** Sam (an employee for a major manufacturing company) has been with the company for a number of years. Recently, Sam has received a performance review showing that the quality & the quantity of his work as well as his attendance & tardiness behaviors have been slowly declining over time. Because of this, Sam has been called into his manager’s office to discuss the low scores on his most recent performance reviews.

*(The manager is sitting behind his desk patiently waiting for Sam to arrive so they can begin the meeting; the manager sits leaned back relaxed in his chair, holding a report up, reading it casually, as he sips on his coffee)*

*(The manager hears a knock, looks up and makes positive and direct eye contact with Sam, who is standing at his door. In a very friendly way, the manager smiles, extends his hand, and welcomes him into his office)*

**Manager:** *(while making direct eye contact in a joking fashion)* Is that how you always fucking dress for work?

**Sam:** *(dressed informally)* Well, today everyone...
Manager: (with a smile on his face and a quick chuckle, the manager cuts Sam’s reply short before he fully answers the question) Have a seat.

(After Sam has sat down, the manager gets up and walks around to the other side of the desk and sits in the chair beside Sam, and orients the chair and his body towards Sam)

Manager: (sincerely worried for Sam and using direct and positive eye contact) The reason I called you into my office today was so that we could go over your disappointing performance review. These scores are extremely disappointing. Because of your laziness and inability to be a productive employee, your scores have been slowly declining over time. Now, certain areas have greatly declined while others have remained consistent with your scores from four years ago when you first started.

Manager: (relaxes and leans back in his chair) Overall, you have the lowest performance scores companywide.

Sam: (Uncertain) what does this mean for my employment here?

Manager: (ignores Sam’s question)

Sam: (looks dejected and scared/worried)

Manager: (leans forward, so Sam can see the review) The first two areas of the performance review have to do with both the quantity and the quality of the work that you complete. (Points at scores so Sam can follow the numerical scores) Not only are you producing less work than others, who have been with the company for the same amount of time, but according to the performance review, the work that you do produce, lacks accuracy and completeness. (Looks at Sam and explains the numerical scores in words) Overall your review says that you work at a slightly slower pace and display a lack in commitment concerning excellence.
Manager: (points at scores so Sam can follow the numerical scores) The final area that the performance review covers has to do with attendance and punctuality, this should be good. (Happily) Surprisingly, there is some good news here; you do give advance notice when you are taking time off. (Worryingly) However, you constantly start work late, and when you are late or take a day off you don’t confirm that your responsibilities are being covered by someone else, oh Sam, how predictable. Upper management has also told me that you are often late for meetings. (Laughs in a joking way) What the hell is wrong with you, are you unable to be a normal productive human being? If you don’t start being more productive and get these scores up, I’ll make sure that you never work for this company again. Sam, do not waste my time anymore. You’re a worthless slacker and you’ll always be a slacker.
Situation: Sam (an employee for a major manufacturing company) has been with the company for a number of years. Recently, Sam has received a performance review showing that the quality & the quantity of his work as well as his attendance & tardiness behaviors have been slowly declining over time. Because of this, Sam has been called into his manager’s office to discuss the low scores on his most recent performance reviews.

(The manager is sitting behind his desk impatiently waiting for Sam to arrive so they can begin the meeting; manager sits leaning forward in his chair, hovering over a report on his desk, grimacing as he keeps looking at the clock on his wrist)

(The manager hears a knock, and very briefly looks up to see that it is Sam at his door. Without ever making direct eye contact, and In a very frustrated way, continues looking at the report on his desk)

Manager: (without making eye contact in a condescending fashion) Is that how you always fucking dress for work?

Sam: (dressed informally) Well, today everyone...

Manager: (with a stern frown on his face, the manager cuts Sam’s reply short before he fully answers the question) Have a seat.

Manager: (looking at the report, in a monotone voice) The reason I called you into my office today was so that we could go over your disappointing performance review. These scores are extremely disappointing. (looks up at Sam with a blank none emotional face)
Because of your laziness and inability to be a productive employee, your scores have been slowly declining over time. Now, certain areas have greatly declined while others have remained consistent with your scores from 4 years ago when you first started.

(The manager becomes irritated; tightens jaw, clenches teeth, frowns)

Manager: Overall, you have the lowest performance scores companywide.

Sam: (Uncertain) what does this mean for my employment here?

Manager: (ignores Sam’s question)

Sam: (looks dejected and scared/worried)

Manager: (picks up review, and reclines back in chair) (exhales in irritation, frowning and in a monotone voice) The first two areas of the performance review have to do with both the quantity and the quality of the work that you complete. Not only are you producing less work than others, who have been with the company for the same amount of time, but according to the performance review, the work that you do produce, (looks at Sam condescendingly, and then reverts his gaze back to the report) lacks accuracy and completeness. Overall your review says that you work at a slightly slower pace and display a lack in commitment concerning excellence.

Manager: The final area that the performance review covers has to do with attendance and punctuality, (pause) this should be good. (Exhales deeply and there is a long pause while he studies the report more) surprisingly, there is some good news here; you do give advance notice when you are taking time off. However, you constantly start work late, and when you are late or take a day off you don’t confirm that your responsibilities are being covered by someone else, (condescendingly) oh Sam, how predictable. Upper
management has also told me that you are often late for meetings. *(Carelessly tosses report onto desk)* what the hell is wrong with you, are you unable to be a normal productive human being? *(Angry, shouts)* if you don’t start being more productive and get these scores up, I’ll make sure that you never work for this company again. Do not waste my time anymore. *(pauses and stares harshly at Sam)* you’re a worthless slacker and you’ll always be a slacker.
Script for video condition 3: (Verbal Aggression Not Used – Nonverbal Immediacy Used)

**Situation:** Sam (an employee for a major manufacturing company) has been with the company for a number of years. Recently, Sam has received a performance review showing that the quality & the quantity of his work as well as his attendance & tardiness behaviors have been slowly declining over time. Because of this, Sam has been called into his manager’s office to discuss the low scores on his most recent performance reviews.

(The manager is sitting behind his desk patiently waiting for Sam to arrive so they can begin the meeting; the manager sits leaned back relaxed in his chair, holding a report up, reading it casually, as he sips on his coffee)

(The manager hears a knock, looks up and makes positive and direct eye contact with Sam, who is standing at his door. In a very friendly way, the manager smiles, extends his hand, and welcomes him into his office)

**Manager:** *(with a smile on his face)* Have a seat.

(After Sam has sat down, the manager gets up and walks around to the other side of the desk and sits in the chair beside Sam, and orients the chair and his body towards Sam)

**Manager:** *(sincerely worried for Sam and using direct and positive eye contact)* the reason I called you into my office today was so that we could go over your performance review. Your scores have been slowly declining over time. Now, certain areas have greatly declined while others have remained consistent with your scores from four years ago when you first started.
Manager: (relaxes and leans back in his chair) Overall, you have the lowest performance scores companywide.

Sam: (Uncertain) what does this mean for my employment here?

Manager: First let’s talk about the review in detail and then we can discuss that.

Sam: (looks dejected, scared/worried)

Manager: (leans forward, so Sam can see the review) The first two areas of the performance review have to do with both the quantity and the quality of the work that you complete. (Points at scores so Sam can follow the numerical scores) Not only are you producing less work than others, who have been with the company for the same amount of time, but according to the review the work that you do produce, lacks accuracy and completeness. (Looks at Sam and explains the numerical scores in words) Overall your review says that you work at a slightly slower pace and display a lack in commitment concerning excellence.

Manager: (points at scores so Sam can follow the numerical scores) The final area that the performance review covers has to do with attendance and punctuality. (Happily) Now, there is some good news here, you do give advance notice when you are taking time off. However, (worryingly) you constantly start work late, and when you are late or take a day off you don’t confirm that your responsibilities are being covered by someone else, and I’ve been told by upper management that you are often late for meetings.
Script for video condition 4: (Verbal Aggression Not Used – Nonverbal Immediacy Not Used)

**Situation:** Sam (an employee for a major manufacturing company) has been with the company for a number of years. Recently, Sam has received a performance review showing that the quality & the quantity of his work as well as his attendance & tardiness behaviors have been slowly declining over time. Because of this, Sam has been called into his manager’s office to discuss the low scores on his most recent performance reviews.

(*The manager is sitting behind his desk waiting for Sam to arrive so they can begin the meeting*)

(*The manager hears a knock, and very briefly looks up to see that it is Sam at his door.*

*Without ever making direct eye contact, and In a non-emotional way, continues looking at the report on his desk*)

**Manager:** (*without using direct eye contact, looks up at Sam*) Have a seat.

**Manager:** (*looking at the report, in a monotone voice*) The reason I called you into my office today was so that we could go over your performance review. (*looks up at Sam with a blank none emotional face from the other side of the desk*) Your scores have been slowly declining over time. Now, certain areas have greatly declined while others have remained consistent with your scores from 4 years ago when you first started.

**Manager:** Overall, you are among the lowest percentile of performance scores, companywide and this is why I called you into my office for this meeting.

**Sam:** (*Uncertain*) What does this mean for my employment here?
Manager: First let’s talk about the review in detail and then we can discuss that

Sam: (looks dejected, scared/worried)

Manager: (picks up review, and sits up straight in chair, in a monotone voice) The first two areas of the performance review have to do with both the quantity and the quality of the work that you complete. Not only are you producing less work than others, who have been with the company for the same amount of time, but according to the review the work that you do produce lacks accuracy and completeness. Overall your review says that you work at a slightly slower pace and display a lack in commitment concerning excellence.

Manager: (in a monotone voice) The final area that the performance review covers has to do with attendance and punctuality. Now, there is some good news here, (studies the report more) you do give advance notice when you are taking time off. However, you constantly start work late, and when you are late or take a day off you don’t confirm that your responsibilities are being covered by someone else, (lays report down onto desk) and I’ve been told by upper management that you are often late for meetings.
APPENDIX D

MANIPULATION-CHECK QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions: Below are a series of statements that describe the ways some people behave while talking with or to others. Indicate how well each statement applies to the manager’s communication with his subordinate. For each statement, describe the manager’s behavior as seen in the video you just saw. Use the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Very Often</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_____ 1. The manager avoided eye contact with his employee during the performance review.

_____ 2. The manager sat close to the employee while talking with him.

_____ 3. The manager has a bland facial expression when he spoke with his employee.

_____ 4. The manager looked directly at the employee while talking with him.

_____ 5. The manager smiled when he talked with the employee.
Instructions: The following statements are about how the manager in the video might try to get his employees to comply with his wishes. For each statement, describe the manager’s behavior as seen in the video you just saw. Use the following scale:

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>Often</td>
<td>Very Often</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_____ 1. The manager was extremely careful to avoid attacking the employee’s intelligence.

_____ 2. When Sam did things the manager regarded as stupid, he tried to be extremely gentle with him.

_____ 3. The manager liked to poke fun at his employee’s competence on the job.

_____ 4. When the manager attacked his employee’s performance, he tried not to damage Sam’s self-concept.

_____ 5. The manager attacked Sam’s character in order to help correct his work performance.
### APPENDIX E

**DEPENDENT VARIABLE QUESTIONNAIRE**

*Instructions: On the scales below, indicate your feelings about the manager you saw in the video.* Numbers 1 and 7 indicate a very strong feeling. Numbers 2 and 6 indicate a strong feeling. Numbers 3 and 5 indicate a fairly weak feeling. Number 4 indicates you are undecided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Intelligent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Untrained</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Honest</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Untrustworthy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Inexpert</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Honorable</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Informed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8)</td>
<td>Moral</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9)</td>
<td>Incompetent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10)</td>
<td>Unethical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11)</td>
<td>Bright</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12)</td>
<td>Phony</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moral: Immoral
Incompetent: Competent
Unethical: Ethical
Bright: Stupid
Phony: Genuine
**Instructions:** On the scales below, indicate your feelings about the manager you saw in the video. Numbers 1 and 7 indicate a very strong feeling. Numbers 2 and 6 indicate a strong feeling. Numbers 3 and 5 indicate a fairly weak feeling. Number 4 indicates you are undecided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Non-Caring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1)</td>
<td>Caring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2)</td>
<td>Has the employees interests at heart</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Doesn’t have the employees interests at heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3)</td>
<td>Self-centered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not self centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4)</td>
<td>Unconcerned</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Concerned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5)</td>
<td>Insensitive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sensitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6)</td>
<td>Empathic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Apathetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7)</td>
<td>Not understanding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8)</td>
<td>Unresponsive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Responsive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9)</td>
<td>Understands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not Understand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instructions: you have impressions of the way people communicate. The following questions are not designed to look at what is communicated; rather, they explore how a message is communicated. Some of the items will be similarly stated. But each item has a slightly different orientation. Try to answer each question as through it were the only question being asked. Finally, using the scale below, indicate your feelings about the manager you saw in the video.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_____ 1. The manager does not have nervous mannerisms in his speech
_____ 2. Under pressure the manager comes across as a relaxed speaker.
_____ 3. The rhythm or flow of the manager’s speech is not affected by nervousness.
_____ 4. The manager is a very relaxed communicator.
_____ 5. The manager readily expresses admiration for others.
_____ 6. To be friendly, the manager habitually acknowledges verbally other’s contributions.
_____ 7. Whenever the manager communicates, he tends to be very encouraging to people.
_____ 8. The manager is always an extremely friendly communicator.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>2 Disagree</th>
<th>3 Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>4 Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>5 Agree</th>
<th>6 Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

_____ 9.  The manager really likes to listen very carefully to people.

_____ 10. The manager can always repeat back to a person exactly what was meant.

_____ 11. Usually, the manager deliberately reacts in such a way that people know that he is listening to them.

_____ 12. The manager is an extremely attentive communicator.
**DIRECTIONS:** Please fill in the following information:

01. Your gender:  _____Male  _____Female

02. Your age (in years): _______

03. Your race:

   _____African American
   _____Asian American
   _____Caucasian
   _____Hispanic American
   _____Native American
   _____Other

04. Your class status:

   _____Freshman
   _____Sophomore
   _____Junior
   _____Senior

05. ACT Score: ______

06. SAT Score  ______
07. Please indicate the communication studies courses you have completed or are currently enrolled in. (Check all that apply)

______ Oral communication
______ Intro to public speaking
______ Effective oral communication
______ Interpersonal communication
______ Argumentation
______ Advanced public speaking
______ Intercultural communication
______ Nonverbal communication

Thank you for participating ☺️