

Being able to communicate positivity, and with enthusiasm, encourages customers to reciprocate in the same manner. However, most of us are unaware of how we are perceived by others and, whilst we may think we are coming across as welcoming and friendly, our body language could be telling a different story.

Hospitality teams are often young, and their self-awareness is often focused on simply trying to fit in and belong. Learning how to make others feel comfortable, welcome and included is something we figure out when we are older. Helping team members understand that the way they talk, smile and stand can influence how others feel, will not only improve customer service but can support them in their own self-development and confidence building.

Produce

Read out the first paragraph on the top of this sheet. From your Silent Customer feedback, read out all the positive comments associated with behaviours from the engagement questions in previous reviews. These can include 'welcome' and 'goodbye'. Do not mention the comments where a team member has lost a point. We focus on learning from positive behaviours.

Explore

Ask your team what 'non-verbal communication' means to them.

Don't be tempted to jump in before someone has spoken up. It may feel like an uncomfortable silence to you, but they will be processing your question.

Never tell someone they are wrong, as you will put others off from making suggestions. Just say "thank you" and ask, "anyone else?" If they struggle, ask them for examples of how we express ourselves with our body language when we are happy, enthused, cross or upset. How does our voice change to reflect these emotions? Discuss the difference between open and closed body language. Ask them what they understand about 'mirroring'. Ask for examples of how you can tell if a customer is unhappy and how you might respond so that your body language matches your words. Discuss what body language you might use to evoke a 'warm welcome'. Encourage them to act out these behaviours on each other to generate fun as well as learning.

Practise

- **Choose a customer with 'closed' body language and see if you make them smile!**
- **See if you can get a customer to mirror your positive body language by being cheerful and enthusiastic**

Ask your team to discuss how they might go about this and ask them to commit to practising on at least two customers in their section.

Here are some examples of what you could 'say' alongside body language:

Compliment – "I really like your dress, shirt, bag."

Statement – "That is a great choice. I love that starter, main, dessert."

Enquiry – "My name is [] let me know if you need anything at all."

Use the methods under 'Explore' to generate other suggestions.

At the end of the shift, ask the teams to share their experiences and about what they observed from their customers' reactions.

Make sure you thank them and tell them what a great job they did. We are always more willing to go the extra mile when we feel like our efforts are appreciated.

Date:

List the names of the participants and any online mentions onto this sheet and keep on your training records. Ensure those with online mentions are recognised with something tangible such as a voucher.

Participants:

Notes/Comments: