

# It's Not Just What You Say, It's What You Radiate

To get your points across as a National Ski Patrol instructor, it's important to realize that people are perceiving you by not just what you say, but how you say it.

To get your fellow patrollers and students to like you, trust you, and respond to you favorably, you need to be sensitive to the messages your body and tone of voice are conveying. Many people when trying to persuade, motivate and influence others are at a disadvantage because they think their verbal skills are all that matter. Little do they realize that people are consciously or unconsciously picking up what you are really saying by observing your body language. To get an unfair advantage in business and exploit your opportunities, use the **SOFTEN** technique to make yourself more approachable, likeable, and trustworthy:

**S - Smile** - A simple smile shows that you really care. It also provides a sense of warmth and increases your likeability. As the saying goes, "A smile is the light in the window that tells people you are home."

**O - Open Posture** By keeping an open posture (i.e., don't cross your legs or arms) you will appear to be open minded, less defensive, less arrogant, and more approachable.

**F - Forward Lean** One of the best ways to show interest is to lean forward when communicating. If you are attentive and interested in them, they will be interested in you.

**T - Territory** - In the USA, the acceptable distance between two people is 14 to 46 inches, Closer than this and people will be distracted, while further distance is interpreted as aloofness.

**E - Eye Contact** - One of the most important ways to establish trust and rapport is through eye contact. Although some cultures may view eye contact differently, for most of us eye contact is positive. In a business presentation, eye contact should not be held for longer than four or five seconds with any one person.

**N - Nodding** - Nodding shows attentiveness, enthusiasm, and validates the speaker.

To be truly successful, we want people to focus on the substance of our message and not the style in which it is presented. By understanding and being sensitive to our body language and the message it is sending, we can increase our chances of getting our message across in a clear and concise

*Arnold Sanow <speaker@arnoldsanow.com>, Blue Knob Ski Patrol*