

# Personal Space: Intimate Zone

Skin contact to 18"

Reserved for close friends and relatives

Voluntarily allowing someone to enter is a sign of trust.

If someone enters without consent, we feel threatened.

- Crowded elevators or buses
- When visiting the doctor or dentist

This causes us to:

- Draw away
- Tense muscles
- Avoid eye contact.

Sometimes people will use a prop such as a briefcase or a purse as a barrier to protect their personal space.

# *Personal Space: Personal Zone*

18" to 4 ft

Eighteen inches is the appropriate amount of space between couples who are in public.

Two and one half feet to four feet is for casual conversation (at arm's length).

Contacts in this zone are reasonably close, but are far less personal.

# Personal Space: Social Zone

4 ft -12 ft

Parties and friendly gatherings

Friends and casual acquaintances.

In business situations.

4-7 ft is an appropriate space for:

Salespeople

Customers

People who work together.

7-12 ft away is reserved for:

More formal and impersonal situations:

This would be the distance at which an employee and his/her boss would feel comfortable

It provides for a less relaxed conversation

# *Personal Space: Public Zone*

It begins at twelve feet and extends outward.

Used by speakers and their audiences

Used in many classrooms

At this distance, two-way communication is practically impossible

Anyone who voluntarily remains at 25 feet and beyond is definitely not interested in dialogue

# *Personal Space & Visual Territory*

Piercing visual territory is as uncomfortable as physical invasion.

Any glance lasting longer than three seconds is likely to be as threatening to you as someone who is standing too closely when walking in public.

As you approach another person, that person will glance away from you at a distance of a few paces, almost like a visual dimming of headlights.

Strangers will maintain eye contact at a close distance, generally speaking only when they want to speak to you

# *Territoriality*

We all stake-out and mark our own territory-space that we consider to be private and our own. It remains stationary, we don't carry it around with us; it is merely a geographical area where we assume some types of rights

Your room

Classrooms without  
assigned seats

# *Territory*

How do we temporarily claim space in public situations?

Studies done in public libraries have found that :

Create a "territorial marker" by spreading coats, or books, or belongings on tables or chairs.

When a book or a personal object has been left on a desk, it will hold the space for a person for about 30 minutes.

If you leave your coat or jacket on the back of a chair, people will stay away for about two hours.

# Don't Invade Personal Space

