

Non-Verbal Communication

Experts reveal that **55% of what gets communicated is accomplished non-verbally**. So, more important than what you say or even how you say it (tone, inflection, etc.), is what you are conveying with your body.

The challenge is always how to control body language?

You may become aware and attempt to ensure you remain only in positions that convey a positive and receptive attitude...

Or

You can check your attitude!

While you can't fake how you feel, know that what you actually feel can easily be revealed by your body language. The manner in which your hands and arms are held, your legs, whether they are crossed or not, etc.

Crossed arms in front of your chest and/or crossed legs are a barrier to clear and open communication. It is *sensed* by the other.

Hopefully, your interviewer will be astute enough to eliminate the desk barrier between you two and sit alongside you during the course of the interview. But remember, sitting behind a desk to conduct an interview may be a choice of some personality types.

We easily acknowledge the value of eye contact and a firm handshake in body language; good eye contact not only tells the other that we are listening, but also reveals something of our own personal self-confidence.

Open hands can signal honesty and receptivity and a smile can tell the other that they are being accepted, something we all want.

Facts on Body Language

1. Your body doesn't lie
2. Your thoughts will get expressed
3. We convey feelings through our attitudes displayed in our behavior
4. Our attitude causes the gesture to occur and prolonging the gesture forces the attitude to remain
5. When we say things we "do not mean," we non-verbally communicate what we really feel
6. When verbal and non-verbal communication are incongruent, the **non-verbal signals will carry about 5 times the impact**
7. Your subconscious works to complete the picture *you* put in it
8. Change the picture first, the behavior will follow

So what to do?

- First, tell yourself (and believe it!) that it's all okay before you enter an encounter with another. Give yourself the assurance and calm that you need
- Focus on what is at hand: not only the present moment, but what it is that you want to convey to this individual; listen carefully (use your active listening skills) to their questions to provide the answer they apparently want but don't go into elaborate detail; if they want more, they'll ask.

- Focusing on the moment and what they are asking for and how you may structure your response to provide all the information they need to make a decision actually allows the anxiety associated with “being on the hot seat” to dissipate...
- Sit forward on your chair; this gives an air of enthusiasm –our interviewer wants to feel that you are looking forward to *this* opportunity. Sitting back in your chair and/or any rocking motion simply fails to send the message you want during an interview.
- Perhaps this all speaks to that “sixth sense” we get about other people, and since we do know that people tend to hire people they like, body language can do a good deal toward creating that positive feeling. Your smile and eye contact, particularly at the moment of the first handshake sets a positive tone for the interaction about to take place. Adding good listening to respond only to the questions asked, being courteous and considerate in asking your own questions, all will ensure that you leave the best impression that you can.