

TOPIC E: COMMUNICATION 101: BODY LANGUAGE

Does your body language reflect the same message as what you are verbally communicating? How we look to others can actually speak LOUDER than what our voice is conveying in our speech.

Body language can be more powerful than the spoken word!

Did you know that in communication, the following represents the impact of the message:

Body Language	55%
Verbal Speech	38%
Tone of Voice	7%

Body language is more difficult to control and to read, it can create an impression. But is it truly accurate?



These co-workers above appear comfortable, at ease, and are smiling.....is that what you see?

Body language, which includes stance, posture, hand and arm placement, facial expression (including the eyes) and head placement, can often be tough to control. How you manage yourself will either strengthen or damage your position in the conversation. Body language can deliver a more powerful message in silence than a well-planned, practiced speech!

When we are in situations we find to be difficult or uncomfortable, we tend to express our inside feelings and emotions outwardly. What can you do to better yourself and be alert to the other people with whom you are communicating?

GUIDE TO READING BODY LANGUAGE

NONVERBAL BEHAVIOR	INTERPRETATION
Brisk, erect walk	Confidence
Standing with hands on hips	Readiness, aggression
Sitting with legs crossed, foot kicking slightly	Boredom
Sitting, legs apart	Open, relaxed
Arms crossed on chest	Defensiveness
Walking with hands in pockets, shoulders hunched	Dejection
Hand to cheek	Evaluation, thinking
Touching, slightly rubbing nose	Rejection, doubt, lying
Rubbing the eye	Doubt, disbelief
Hands clasped behind back	Anger, frustration, apprehension
Locked ankles	Apprehension
Head resting in hand, eyes downcast	Boredom
Rubbing hands	Anticipation
Sitting with hands clasped behind head, legs crossed	Confidence, superiority
Open palm	Sincerity, openness, innocence
Pinching bridge of nose, eyes closed	Negative evaluation
Tapping or drumming fingers	Impatience
Steepling (connecting fingers prayer-like)	Authoritative
Patting/fondling hair	Lack of self-confidence; insecurity
Tilted head	Interest
Stroking chin	Trying to make a decision
Looking down, face turned away	Disbelief
Biting nails	Insecurity, nervousness
Pulling or tugging at ear	Indecision

MANAGING YOUR BODY LANGUAGE

Improving your body language can make a big difference in succeeding in all areas of your life and business relationships, overall people skills, attractiveness and general mood. You will use your body language differently when talking to your boss compared to other situations or conversations. It is essentially a skill and an art in communication. Initially, to change your body language, practice awareness of how you sit, stand, and use your hands and legs while talking with another person.



To get started, practice in front of a mirror. This will give you immediate feedback on how you look to other people and give you an opportunity to modify your appearance. Practice until you feel more confident and at ease! Soon it will become more natural and you will be more aware of yourself in your conversations.

Remember....

1. **Don't cross your arms or legs** – You have probably already heard you shouldn't cross your arms as it might make you seem defensive or guarded. This goes for your legs too. Keep your arms and legs open.
2. **Have eye contact, but don't stare** – If there are several people you are talking to, give them all some eye contact to create a better connection and see if they are listening. Keeping too much eye contact might make some people feel uncomfortable and no eye contact will make you seem insecure.
3. **Relax your shoulders** – The shoulders are often where tension is evident. Relaxing your shoulders may help you relax overall.
4. **Acknowledge their words by a nod when they are talking** – Nod once in a while to signal that you are listening.
5. **Don't slouch** – Sit up straight but do so in a relaxed manner. Try not to appear stiff.
6. **Lean, but not too much** – If you want to show that you are interested in what someone is saying, lean toward the person talking. If you want to show that you're confident in yourself and relaxed, lean back a bit.
7. **Smile and laugh** – Lighten up, don't take yourself too seriously. Relax a bit, smile and laugh when someone says something funny. People will be a lot more inclined to listen to you if you seem to be a positive person. But don't be the first to laugh at your own jokes, it makes you seem nervous and needy. Smile when you are introduced to someone but don't keep a smile plastered on your face or you will seem insincere.
8. **Keep your head up** – Don't keep your eyes on the ground which will make you seem insecure and a bit lost. Keep your head up straight and your eyes towards the horizon.
9. **Don't fidget** – Relax, slow down and focus your movements.
10. **Don't stand too close** – Many people become uncomfortable if people get too close to them. Let people have their personal space and don't invade it.

Keep a **good attitude** and remain **positive**...this will come across clearly in your body language and tone of voice!

LEARNING TO LISTEN

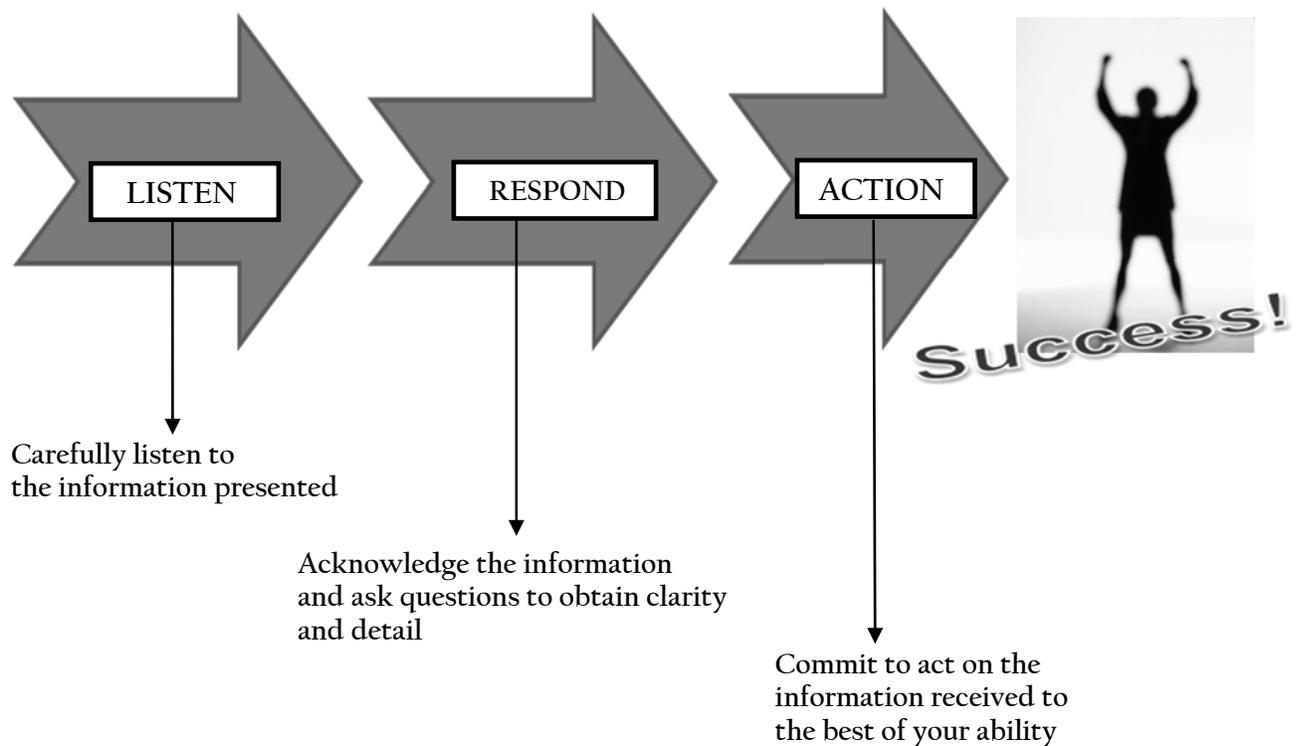
Communication is a two-way concept. Therefore, it is necessary that both sides understand each other.

How you listen will convey a message to the other person and will ensure the conversation is understood!

The ultimate respect you can give to someone is to listen...



USE THESE THREE STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION



COMMUNICATING USING THE PHONE



In business today, much communication is done over the phone or computer. Phone communications are extremely key in today's business because they encourage immediate accessibility between you and a customer, internal or external. It is important to have a confident speaking voice on the phone since you are not able to be face-to-face with the other person or persons in your conversation.

Make sure that you are prepared when having a phone conversation by writing down the name of the person to whom you are talking. Take notes and occasionally repeat back information to confirm your understanding.

The Conversation Tips:

- Concentrate on what is being said
- Visualize the speaker if on the phone
- Hold your tongue, don't interrupt
- Take notes
- Use summarizing statements
- Use conversation cues if the caller is getting long-winded
- Listen between the lines and remain open-minded

And last, but not least....**SMILE!** Wearing a smile makes you feel happier and will also brighten up the whole room. Smiling will also make you feel more positive and have a feeling of well-being.

Do you know the code?

- S Smile increases the receptiveness of those around you.
- M Make the guest feel comfortable
- I Information gathering
- L Learn the other person's name
- E Eye contact establishes credibility and confidence



BEST PHONE PRACTICES

Check your verbal presentation. Speak distinctly at a moderate pace, with enough volume to be heard clearly. Don't mumble, turn away from the phone, or rush through sentences.

Stay with your caller. Don't give important information when the caller doesn't appear to be listening. Instead, use an introductory phrase to get the caller's attention: "Sir?" "Ma'am?" "Excuse me..."

Use language for understanding. Avoid company jargon or acronyms. When you must use a term callers may not understand, explain it: "You will need to fill out an order correction form - that is the blue, two page form required for all order changes."

Repeat, or spell out, information. All names, addresses, numbers, and dates should be repeated or spelled out. And be specific. Instead of saying, "We'll be open again tomorrow," say "We'll be open from 8am-5pm tomorrow." For confusing numbers, say, "That's 30: three-zero" or "13: one-three."

Ask for feedback. You can "quiz" your callers on how well they're listening by asking them to repeat information. Say: "Do you mind repeating that number back, so I can be sure I gave it to you correctly?"

Encourage questions. This technique is especially useful for complex topics. Again, be careful that you don't talk down to the caller: "I know I've covered a lot. Is there anything you'd like me to review?" Or, "Before we hang up, is there anything I was not clear about?"



COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

The advancement of technology in communications has greatly increased choices as well as the skills required for success!

Three Keys of E-Mail Communications:

1. Send only essential messages and information
2. Keep message or memo short and precise
3. Avoid delays in replying to messages and e-mails

Practicing these keys in using e-mail will ensure that your communications are professional, accurate, and reliable.



E-Mail in the office:

- Don't e-mail or forward jokes indiscriminately to business colleagues or to clients.
- Don't use email to communicate sensitive or potentially embarrassing subjects. First, you have no control over how the e-mail gets distributed or forwarded. An e-mail with confidential or potentially embarrassing information can easily end up in the wrong hands.
- E-mail is not a completely dynamic communication format, like face-to-face or phone discussions.

DON'T TYPE YOUR E-MAILS IN CAPITAL LETTERS. THIS IS CONSIDERED SHOUTING AND MAY BE CONSIDERED OFFENSIVE!

We are challenged by the increase of technological advancements in communications, and, as a result, learning to use them effectively assures a strengthened and capable workforce.

Employers look for and need employees with good communication skills. A valued employee will listen, learn and apply sensible communication techniques and practices.

COMPETENCY

YOUR 15 SECONDS OF FAME~THE ELEVATOR SPEECH

You have a chance...you were introduced to a management staff member at a company you are interested in working for and they have asked you to tell them a little bit about yourself...you have 15 seconds to dazzle them...ready?

Your elevator speech is that 15-30 second sound bite that sufficiently introduces yourself, your career aspirations/goals, and your unique qualifications. Your speech should consist of your name, field of interest or desired position, and something special about yourself: talents, experience or approach. Your goal is to stand out from the crowd, so be memorable. You will be required to give your speech to your class.

The key- **ENERGY** – energy in your voice and in your body language. Elevator speeches have become over-processed and passive.

Step 1: Write a short personal commercial that includes the following:

- Who you are
- How you help people

Step 2:

- Get a timer and practice your introduction, maybe in front of a mirror – Practice it until it feels natural.

REMEMBER:

Pronounce your name clearly. Be upbeat. Smile. Offer a business card as you are shaking hands or another easy way to remember you/your name.

Leave the industry jargon out. You may deal with widgets and their special terminology all day, but most people won't know what you're talking about.

Be brief, and then be quiet.

Listen to others' introductions.

Write your presentation of yourself in a few short sentences which convey the essence of who you are, why you're calling or speaking with the person, and what you want. You will need to take some time to compose this speech. Feel free to memorize as much of it as you can, but don't simply repeat it to the person as if it were a "canned" speech. Try to make it sound spontaneous and fresh.
