

## **The role of body language on the speaker in accepting or rejecting the message.**

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### **Abstract:**

Body language expresses a type of non-verbal communication that depends on body movements, such as: facial expressions, movements, and various gestures made by a person, and they are used consciously or unconsciously sometimes, and usually these physical signals accompany a spoken message, or are It is used instead of speaking, and this language is greatly noticed by others, because it is more honest than verbal communication. Body movements must often be identical with the words that accompany them, and when these signs do not match the words that come out with them, there becomes a contradiction between what the person says. And what he means, which provokes others to question his meaning again.

Although there are some common gestures, body language differs from one person to another. Each body has its own language, which is called the “standard.” It is simply the natural state of a person in which he is, far from any kind of pressure, fear, anxiety, Sadness and all the factors that may lead him to hide a certain truth or feelings. The process of analyzing body language is the process of comparing the rest of the person’s behavior and this standard that we draw through our knowledge of the person. However, if the person is a stranger to us, our process of reading body language will pass by comparing gestures. His body and the gestures we would expect him to have in that situation, taking gender and external factors into account. And find out whether it matches what he said, or whether there is an interesting secret waiting for you to discover it.

### **What is body language?**

If you've gauged a friend or stranger’s mood just by looking at their face or gestures they made, you successfully read their body language. The body language definition refers to nonverbal cues we consciously and unconsciously use to communicate. It includes all non-verbal communication.

The words we use when speaking make up our verbal communication. The non-verbal cues that make up a person's body language often communicate more than the words they use. These cues can include:

- Facial expressions

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- Hand gestures
- Mannerisms
- Physical behavior
- Tone of voice

We'll look at cues in more detail as we delve deeper into how to read body language below.

One of the most important facts about body language signs is that we often use nonverbal signals instinctively or unconsciously.

For this reason, body language can often tell others more about what we think or feel than the words we use.



Depending on the body language you use, you can encourage the person you're communicating with to trust you and be relaxed in your presence. Or you can confuse or offend them.

The types of nonverbal communication you use can even undermine or contradict what you say.

**Why is understanding body language important?**

So, why is body language important, and what are the benefits of learning how to understand it?

The answers to these questions become clearer when we look at the 7-38-55 rule. This rule is based on the findings of psychology professor Albert Mehrabian. The University of California professor developed the rule in the late '60s and early '70s.

According to Mehrabian, the spoken word communicates 7% of meaning. Your tone of voice communicates 38% of meaning, and your body language communicates 55% of meaning.

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Given how much we communicate via body language cues, learning how to understand them is essential if you're serious about being a good communicator. When you know how to read body language, you can gain deeper insight into what others are really saying.

You can also consciously improve your nonverbal communication.

Let's explore the benefits of understanding body language:

1. Develop your emotional awareness

Being able to read body language signs allows you to better interpret the emotions and moods of other people. This enables you to understand what they really think or feel about something.

You can then respond to them in the appropriate way.

2. Bond better with your peers

Not everyone is comfortable sharing their true feelings or thoughts. They might be going through family difficulties at home. Or they might feel that no one would listen to them anyway.

By interpreting people's body language, you can better understand their views. Or you can be friendly and supportive when they need support but don't feel that they can ask for it.

3. Build trust easier

When you know how to read body language, you know how to use it to build trust.

You can consciously use nonverbal cues that indicate you're being open and honest. You can also avoid the cues that imply you're distracted, dishonest, or hiding something .



#### 4. Get your point across in the right way

Another benefit of understanding body language is that you can use it to better get your point across. You can consciously incorporate gestures and other nonverbal cues that emphasize your point rather than contradict it.

#### 5. Make a good impression and influence people

Consciously using different types of nonverbal communication can help you appear confident, even if you don't feel it. You can also emphasize your message and inspire trust, as mentioned. Altogether, this helps you make a good first impression and builds your influence on others.

#### How to read body language according to every body part

Learning how to read body language signals isn't limited to one or two parts of the body.

Familiarize yourself with these parts of the body that offer important insights into a person and their message.

#### 1. Eyes

The eyes are known as the windows of the soul. They play an important role in face-to-face communication. Take note of body language signs such as:

- **Eye contact:** a direct gaze indicates interest unless it's prolonged, in which case it can be threatening. Looking away frequently or avoiding eye contact can indicate that the person is uncomfortable, trying to hide something, or distracted.
- **Pupil dilation:** highly dilated pupils can indicate excitement, attraction, or desire. Constricted, smaller pupils could indicate anger or a negative mood.
- **Blinking:** frequent blinking can indicate that the person feels uncomfortable or upset.

#### 2. Facial expressions

Often unconscious, our facial expressions can reveal what we really think about something.

There is no global standard for facial expressions linked to specific emotions. The meaning behind facial expressions depends on context. However, expressions can indicate a range of emotions.

Among them are:

- Happiness
- Anger
- Sadness

- Confusion
- Contempt
- Fear
- Excitement

### 3. Arms

A person's arms can also be used for non-verbal communication. Body language examples of this include:

- Keeping the arms close to the body to draw less attention
- Expanding the arms to appear more commanding, larger, or threatening
- Crossing the arms to indicate feelings of self-protection, defensiveness, or being closed-off



### 4. Feet and legs

Our feet and legs aren't the first body parts that come to mind when we think about types of nonverbal communication.

However, they also play a role in body language psychology:

- Both feet pointed toward you or in a V-shape toward you can indicate interest.
- Both feet pointed away from you, especially in an angled V-shape, can indicate disinterest.
- Crossed legs may indicate the person feels disinterested or closed-off.

### 5. Hands and fingers

From excitable hand-flapping to obscene gestures, we can use our hands to express a lot of emotions. Being aware of the hands and fingers is an important part of learning how to read body language.

Examples of using the hands and fingers for nonverbal communication include:

- Giving a thumbs-up as a sign of approval
- Using the index and middle fingers to form a forward-facing V-sign to indicate victory
- Raising a clenched fist to indicate anger or solidarity
- Clasping hands behind your back to indicate anxiety or boredom
- Rapidly tapping fingers to express irritation or frustration
- Standing with hands on the hips to indicate control or aggression

### 6. Torso

The torso also offers a few important body language examples:

- An erect posture and open torso (rather than being shielded by crossed arms) can show confidence, assertiveness, and attention.
- A slouched posture can indicate boredom, disinterest, and being closed-off.

### 7. Mouth

The mouth makes some of the most important body language signs.

Examples include:

- Smiling to show happiness, approval, sarcasm, or cynicism
- Biting the lower lip to indicate insecurity or worry
- Covering the mouth to hide a reaction such as a genuine smile or smirk
- Pursing the lips to indicate disapproval, distrust, or annoyance

### 5 ways to read positive body language

Knowing how to read positive body language can help you in business and social contexts. Here are a few things to look out for:

#### 1. Having good posture

If someone is sitting up straight, it's a sign they're paying attention to what you're saying. An open posture also indicates friendliness.

#### 2. Maintaining eye contact

There's a difference between maintaining eye contact and staring or glaring.

If someone makes a healthy amount of direct eye contact with you, it means they're engaged in the conversation and paying attention. It's normal for them to blink and look away occasionally.

If someone stares or glares at you, it's usually not a positive sign.



### 3. Leaning in to listen

Various body language signs indicate that someone is listening to what you're saying. If their head and torso are turned in your direction and they're leaning toward you, it means they're listening.

Other positive signs include nodding their head, sitting with arms and legs uncrossed, and aiming an ear in your direction.

### 4. Keeping the body still

If a person's body is still, it can mean they're relaxed. It can also indicate that they're focused and paying attention to what you're saying.

If the person's emotion or attitude isn't clear from how still their body is, look at the other types of nonverbal behavior on display.

### 5. A firm handshake

If someone gives you a firm handshake, it's a sign that they respect you.

If they were the one to reach out to shake hands, they probably have healthy self-confidence. A firm handshake should not be painful, as that can be intimidating.

### 5 ways to read negative body language

Your knowledge of body language psychology should also include negative signs.

When you can recognize the following signs in your audience, you can change tactics or express your message in another way.

If you become aware that you're using negative nonverbal cues, you can consciously change them to positive cues. This is a way of supporting or encouraging the speaker by letting them know you're interested — or by disguising the fact that you're not interested.

In situations where discretion is best, you can use negative types of nonverbal communication to express distrust, disinterest, or disapproval.

Negative body language examples include:

#### 1. Bad posture or slouching

If the person you're communicating with is slouched or tense, it's a sign that they're bored. They might also feel disinterested, threatened, or worried.

You can use verbal and nonverbal cues to reassure them or to regain their interest.

#### 2. Avoiding eye contact

If someone avoids making eye contact with you, it could be a negative sign for one or more reasons.

Having a lot of eye movement and not making eye contact may indicate that they're disinterested or distracted. They might be trying to hide something, or they feel uncomfortable or guilty.

#### 3. Crossed arms

Interpreting crossed arms is one of the basics of learning how to read body language, as it's one of the classic negative signs.

Crossed arms are likely to show that the person feels defensive or closed-off to you and your message. It can also indicate aggression or anger.





#### 4. Fidgeting and unable to keep still

If someone is fidgeting or unable to keep still, it's a sign that they are distracted, bored, or uninterested in what you are saying. Stress can also cause fidgeting.

Common types of fidgeting include foot-tapping, crossing and uncrossing of legs, or consistently playing with an object such as a pen.

#### 5. Negative facial expressions

A range of facial expressions can indicate negative attitudes or emotions. Recognizing them can help you understand your audience's actual responses to your message.

Frowning may indicate disagreement, anger, or confusion.

Pursed lips usually indicate annoyance, displeasure, and distaste.

Flared nostrils may show aggression or disapproval. Or they can indicate that the person is making a judgment about something.

Upskill yourself by learning how to read body language

Learning how to read body language, as well as how to use it consciously, is an important soft skill that has many benefits in the workplace and outside of it. Upskilling yourself with powerful communication skills will help you move your career forward.

Reading body language can help you better respond to your audience, whether they're family members, friends, or coworkers. You can tailor your

communication to them when you can identify what engages and interests them.

You can use different types of nonverbal communication to:

- Repeat and strengthen your verbal message
- Complement your verbal message
- Substitute for a verbal message

### **Accent elements of your message**

Why is Body Language Important?

Body language allows us to decode what a person is truly thinking or feeling without solely relying on their speech alone. It acts as an additional insight into unspoken emotions which can be crucial in the workplace.

We can use body language to give our words more impact and communicate more effectively.

Think about this example:

A speaker who gives off negative body language signals during their speech (turning their back to the audience or standing slouched), will be less likely to engage their audience and encourage them to listen to what they have to say.

This might sound harsh, but this is just how our human brains think.

Not only is this speaker losing the interest of their audience, but they're also steering away the audience's attention from the topic – no matter how important it is. No one wants this to happen.

3 Main Reasons Why Body Language is Important:

#### **1. Understand the Feelings of Others**

Being able to read body language means you can understand how another person is truly feeling using unspoken words and reactions.

Some body language types can be difficult to spot as they can happen fast, so you need to give attention to keep up and stay on the ball.

Read about [common types of body language so you can read anyone's body language](#).

#### **2. Show You're Truly Engaged**

Want to show someone you're truly engaged in their conversation without actually saying it?

Use your body language.

If you're speaking one-on-one with someone, open up your body language using good posture, a healthy amount of eye contact, open hand gestures if having a discussion and a smile.

This means no crossed arms, hands on hips, harsh hand gestures or zero eye contact! Using disengaged body language might appear that you're uninterested in what they have to say - even if you're not.

Thinking about your body language when you're listening will help you bond and develop relationships with anyone you speak to.

### **3. Demonstrate Your Confidence**

Not everyone feels confident, especially if you become uncomfortable under pressure or in front of groups of people.

But even the most visually confident people in the world have days where they don't feel confident but still look it.

So how do they do it?

Using body language.

If you look confident using nonverbal communication, your audience is more likely to believe in your words and follow your lead.

### **Is Body Language More Impactful Than Words?**

**"Actions speak louder than words."**

You've probably come across that saying once or twice before. But is body language alone more powerful than words?

We believe that both verbal and nonverbal communication are equally important and they work together to create a powerful impact. When used effectively, they can amplify the overall message, create a lasting impression on the listener and make or break an interaction.

#### **Importance of Using Body Language Cues in the Workplace**

Just because you're not singing on stage or a football manager answering questions, doesn't mean the same body language principles don't apply to you in the workplace.

If you want to show you're a team player and that you truly care about the organisation and your colleagues, body language is your answer.

Body language in the workplace can help you show your enthusiasm for projects, your team and their successes or even your friendliness with new team members.

Using body language will help you find it easier to have conversations with colleagues and team members and achieve what you set out to in the workplace. By not using nonverbal cues in the workplace, you might be misunderstood and leave others confused about your true thoughts on their conversation or even them as a person.

If you stare at someone and subconsciously grind your teeth, others are going to notice and become defensive. We advise you not to do this!

**Further reading:**

How to Improve Your Body Language for the Workplace | 5 Ways

**1. Move slowly**

If you've ever watched a presentation where the speaker rushes their words, uses quick hand gestures and can't stand in one place, you'll know about this.

Moving quickly with a sense of urgency shows you're uncomfortable in the situation and can also make your audience feel the same.

Although you might be feeling uncomfortable, you may not want your audience to know.

By slowing down your movements, you'll become more relaxed and confident in your words - and your audience will too!

**2. Ask for Feedback From Your Peers**

Try to be aware of the impact your body language is having during different interactions throughout the day. It might even be worth [asking for feedback](#) from those you've spoken to really understand how your body language comes across to others.

**3. Adopt an Open Posture**

**What's the difference between an open and closed posture?**

- An open posture is a relaxed individual who uses open body language, such as facing the person or placing hands apart to appear approachable and receptive.
- A closed posture is when a person crosses their arms or faces away from a person while they're talking. This shows defensiveness and disinterest in the person or the conversation.

By using an open posture, you can build a connection more easily

**Bonus Tip:** If you find it difficult to remember to use an open posture, give mirroring techniques a try. This is when you pay attention to the body language of others and mirror it subtly - reflecting their expressions or body positions.

This doesn't mean mimicking their every move but doing so subtly to create a rapport with that person.

#### **4. Mirror Facial Expressions**

Whether you're speaking to a friend who's going through a hard time or you're in an important meeting where big decisions need to be made, try to mirror the facial expressions of those around you. This is a great way to show friendliness and openness and makes the speaker feel that they've been heard.

For example, if a friend comes to you with a personal issue they've been struggling with, they're looking for empathy and understanding, not anger or extreme happiness. By mirroring facial expressions in situations like these, you can validate their feelings and show they're not alone in this issue they're going through.

#### **5. Attend a Confidence and Assertiveness Course**

If you want to make a positive impact at work or with your colleagues, start by understanding how you are perceived in certain situations. This will help you get the results you're looking for no matter the context.

#### **Key Takeaways**

- Body language means nonverbal communication such as eye contact, hand movements and gestures.
- Body language is essential in communication because it gives us insights into how a person is really feeling and thinking.
- Using body language in the workplace offers an opportunity to show you're truly engaged in conversation, interested in what another person is saying and demonstrate confidence.
- Start improving how you use body language in the workplace by attending one of our courses, adopting an open posture (no crossed arms and slouching) and asking for feedback from colleagues to see which areas you need to focus on.

Improve Your Daily Interactions at Work with our Free Communication Skills Handbook

Body language is just a small part of becoming a fantastic communicator. If you're trying to improve your communication skills or you'd like to be a more engaging public speaker, then download our helpful guide today.

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