

Class 6 - Body language

1. Warm-up

Nonverbal communication makes up about two-thirds of all communication between two people or between one speaker and a group of listeners. So body language *is* important. How much do you know? Match the gestures with their meanings

Torso

torso forward	interest, attention, feeling involved
torso backwards	stepping back, being tired or lack of interest
torso upright	neutrality

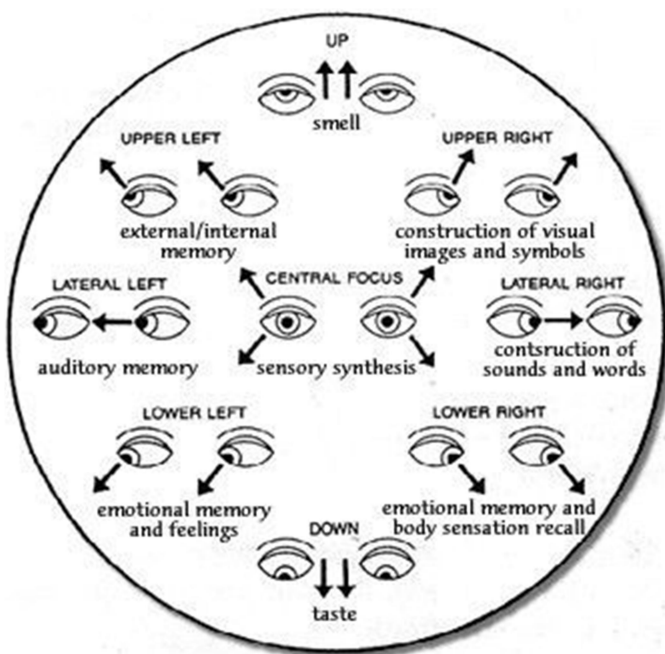
Hands and arms

Hiding hands	indicates a desire not to communicate or not to collaborate
Palms held out, upwards	show you are sincere and willing to share
Palms down	show authority, control over the audience. Can be used at the start of a talk.
Arms apart, palms parallel, cutting	focus the talk on a precise point, show limited possibilities.
Palms moving up and down	calming gesture
Palms downwards sideways	you are powerless

Pointing (with finger)	aggressive, accusing (or rude if pointing at someone)
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Eyes

looking right (generally)	creating, fabricating, guessing, lying, storytelling
looking left (and up)	recalling, remembering, retrieving facts
looking right and up	visual imagining, fabrication, lying
looking left sideways	recalling or remembering sounds
direct eye contact (when speaking)	show interest, honesty
widened eyes	show honesty - or faked honesty



Aggressive body language

Posture torso forward spreading out / taking up too much space	Hands and arms moving too much gestures too wide finger pointing
Face and eyes staring grinning	Voice too loud booming
Potential interpretations by an interviewer: this person is overconfident / arrogant / rude / aggressive	

Passive body language

Posture torso backwards	Hands and arms fidgeting hiding hands (maybe behind back)
Face and eyes looking down or away tense facial expressions	Voice whispering speaking too fast
Potential interpretations by an interviewer: this person is nervous / shy can't handle pressure well / can't work under pressure	

Assertive body language

Posture neutral torso upright	Hands and arms meaningful, controlled gestures gesturing to the point palms held out, upwards
Face and eyes relaxed direct eye contact	Voice expressive intonation speaking neither too loud or too quietly speaking neither too fast nor too slowly OK to make pauses / silences
Potential interpretations by an interviewer: this person is confident can voice their opinion without being aggressive can keep their bearings	

2. Video “Your body language may shape who you are”

[Your body language may shape who you are | Amy Cuddy | TED](#)

Match the words from the video with their equivalent.

words from video	equivalent	words from video	equivalent
a hack	innovative change	an outcome	a result, a consequence
to give away	to reveal	a physician (US)	a doctor
to hunch	to bend your body	to sue	to take to court
to tweak (informal)	to make a minor change	dramatic	striking
awkward	embarrassing	gubernatorial	de gouverneur
contemptuous	méprisant, dédaigneux	pride	orgueil, fierté
a wink	un clin d'oeil	sight	the fact of being able to see
an inference	a deduction	to wrap up	s'enrouler dans qqch

Watch the Ted video and answer the questions.

1. What does Amy Cuddy want her audience to do?

To do an audit of their body and check what it's doing (position).

2. What is interesting to observe in others' body language?

Awkward interaction / smile / contemptuous glance / wink / handshake

3. Which term is used by scientists for 'body language'?

Non verbal behaviour or nonverbals.

4. What can be predicted simply by watching someone's body language?

Who will be hired or promoted, or who will be asked out on a date.

5. Explain the anecdote with the doctor.

Just watching a patient-doctor interaction without any sound will tell you if the doctor might be sued or not: nothing to do with competence! The question is: is he nice or not?

6. What about political candidates?

In one second, judgement is made about a person, and 70% of the results can be guessed.

7. Who else is influenced by non-verbals? Ourselves

8. What's her job? What does she study? Where does she work?

Social psychologist – prejudice – competitive business school.

9. What is she especially interested in?

Power dynamics, non verbal expressions of power and dominance.

10. How do animals and humans express power?

They expand- make themselves big – take space- open up.

11. How do people express their pride of winning at a physical competition?

Arms are raised in V shape, chin is slightly lifted.

12. What unexpected category of people does the same thing?

People born blind who've never seen anyone do the same.

13. What happens when we feel powerless?

We do the opposite: we close up, we wrap ourselves up, we make ourselves small.

14. What happens when we are facing someone powerful?

We make ourselves small, we don't mirror them, we do the opposite.

3. Video “Body language in a job interview”

[Your body language in a job interview](#)

Complete the 10 tips

1 Greet modestly with an equal handshake

It's always difficult greeting someone for the first time. Humm, a little aggressive. Your interviewer knows you want the job so don't **astound** them with an **overconfident** gesture. Avoid noise flicking, high fives, air kisses or jazz hands. Play it simple and **mirror their handshake grip** to avoid dominant vibes.

2 Relax into your chair

The interviewer will show you to your chair. This is the all important hot seat and the way you sit conveys a lot of information. Take a moment to position and **get comfortable**...but not too comfortable. Look relaxed. It encourages your interviewer to feel at ease in your company. However, no matter how informal the discussion, avoid **slouching**. You're not at home watching the telly now.

3 Don't form body barriers

An interview is not the time to come over all shy and retiring. **Folding the arms** across your chest or **turning the shoulders away** conveys a nervous, negative or even aggressive attitude. That's it! Use your upper torso to define an open and honest attitude. Keep the back straight and **tilt slightly forward** to demonstrate interest.

4 Keep your hands away from your face

Children cover their mouths when they're telling lies. As we get older, this subconscious habit turns into **nose touching**, **cheek brushing** or the tweaking of the tool shed. If you're stroking the nose, caressing sideburns or chin scratching, these actions can make your interviewer feel **suspicious**. Right! Avoid **touching your face** by keeping your hands **interlocked** or relaxed in your lap.

5 Stay focused

It's important to concentrate during your interview. Stop **constant eye movement** or repetitive looks to the floor or ceiling. By moving the eyes around the room, you risk looking **devious**, **apprehensive** or just plain **bored**. Give your interviewer your full attention. Look and listen.

6 Sit still

During the interview, don't transfer your butterflies into **reflexes**, like **fidgeting**. Watching your legs perform a neat rendition of Riverdance under the table is one distraction the interviewer doesn't need. Channel your nerves into **simple**, yet **elegant** hand gestures to endorse what you say.

7 Stop being picky

Yes, that's a nice tie but **obsessive touching** or grooming of your garments conveys an element of **boredom** or **distrust**. Even if you're certain there's a speck on your clothes, leave it alone. No one else will notice but you.

8 Maintain eye contact

Keep your eye contact **true** and **steady...** but remember to blink. An interview can be intense so avoid adopting a serial killer stare. Instead **create an imaginary triangle** on your interviewer's face and look within that zone. Try not to **drop your gaze** below the triangle though. Any further south and things start to get a little intimate.

9 Steer your body

Crossing your legs during the interview is agreeable and will not appear as **defensive** as crossing your arms. It's useful if you **point to** the interviewer with your knees or your feet. This will help you position your body so you're **focused** on them alone. But don't overdo it.

10 Use your hands

Being physically expressive as you speak shows **confidence** in what you're saying. Use your hands to **roll out** answers or **give shape** to your ideas. That's it! The interviewers think that you know what you're talking about. However, don't exaggerate the gestures. You're not breaking moves at the local discotheque. And avoid **finger pointing**. Instead, motion with your hands **palm(s) up** as this signifies an offering gesture.

4. Body language preparation for the video profile

Here are some basic principles that you need to keep in mind:

1 Body language in general

Hands and arms gestures must start from you towards the audience (shows willingness to share and open mindedness), below your face, above the desk.

Eye contact is of course essential and must be expressive.

Any object you place between you and the audience may indicate you place an "obstacle" or protect yourself.

2 Voice

- Make it expressive and interesting by varying intonation and pace.
- When stressed out, people have a tendency to speak too fast. Be aware of your own pace and, if necessary, slow it down (by 20%).
- Lower your voice. This will give more meaning to what you are saying.
- Pause before and after important words or phrases.
- Make sure your voice does not go up at the end of sentences. This would create doubt in what you are saying.
- Articulate
- Speak up. Avoid mumbling. Be confident. What you are saying is interesting.
- Make sure you pronounce the names of degrees, places, schools correctly