

The gestures come to you at once, don't they? And they're a little different for each of us, based on our background and who we watched growing up, but they would be universally understood.

- Words are extravagant. They can eventually describe and tell, but you need to use many to get depths of feeling across.

- Body language is succinct. It shows feelings much more economically, more directly and eloquently. It evokes feeling responses in us very quickly.

- Words separate. Not only the difference between foreign languages and our own, but vocabulary and pronunciation define class, level of accomplishment, education, and social station.

- Body language can unify. Because life is essentially a series of universal common experiences—birth, death, marriage, children, happy, sad, hungry, fearful—we can understand each other instantly through physical expression. Need a drink in a foreign country? No problem. You'll show them. And in showing them, you also show our commonality. The recognition of that unifying concept by others draws us instantly closer—whether it is tears in Tibet or a welcoming smile at a business meeting in Boston.

Words and movement together comprise a dual dialogue. If they *match* and are consistent with each other, they strengthen and underscore meaning. If they are inconsistent, incongruously saying two *different* things, the viewer disregards the words—the verbal—and believes the body language—the non-verbal.

If you stand there *saying*, "The figures for this quarter show great strength, " at the same time that you avoid eye contact, clear your throat, and shuffle your papers, you've convinced us only of what you're trying to hide!

COMMON OBSTACLES TO COMMUNICATION

How People Feel About Learning

New information or information that challenges existing beliefs or systems presents problems to any communicator. As a species, people