Training Exercise - Body Language

**Introduction: Write Your Own Introduction**

**Body: Use the content below**

While vocal delivery is important, how you use the rest of your body is also important.

**Your body communicates 55% of your message as a presenter. Use it to engage and hold audience interest and to emphasize key points.**

**Maintaining Eye Contact**

* Leonardo da Vinci stated, “The eyes are the mirror of the soul.” They are also one of the most accurate reflections of a presenter’s professionalism.
* Establish and maintain audience rapport.
  + Direct eye contact builds feelings of trust and creates an aura of credibility for you as a presenter.
  + Take a few moments to look around the room to establish eye contact with people in various sections of the audience.
  + If there are key members in the audience, such as top management or potential clients, be sure to establish eye contact with them early and maintain it throughout the presentation. This helps build your credibility.
  + Shift your gaze from one group of people to another throughout the presentation. Don’t focus too much on the first few rows. If you don’t include people on the sides and in the back, you’ll lose them.

**Establish and Maintain Confidence**

* People with little speaking experience may find eye contact scary. However, with experience, most find it to be a great confidence builder.
  + If it’s too hard at first, try looking at the foreheads or chins of audience members. It can give the same impression as direct contact.
  + If that’s still too hard, try concentrating on the friendly faces in the audience.
  + Eye contact builds your audience’s confidence too – in you. It establishes a feeling of trust. Speakers who don’t maintain eye contact are often perceived as insincere of dishonest.
  + **[Illustrate by speaking with head down.]**
  + Gauge and enhance effectiveness.
  + Another advantage of eye contact is that it allows you to gauge your audience’s reaction to you. Their eyes will tell you if they’re with you or you’ve lost them.
  + Learn to read their language – If they’re not looking at you, you’ve probably lost their attention.

**Using Effective Body Language**

* Did you know the body does most of the talking in presentations? Make sure the messages your body is sending are the ones you want to deliver.
  + Posture
  + Stand tall.
  + Up straight! Stomach in! Chest out! Shoulders back!
  + Military-sounding, but even though things are a little more relaxed today, for a presenter, posture is still a big part of your message.
  + You communicate numerous messages by the way you talk and move. Standing erect and leaning forward communicates that you are approachable, receptive, and friendly.
  + Interpersonal closeness results when you and your audience face each other. Speaking with your back turned or looking at the floor or ceiling should be avoided as it communicates disinterest.
  + Keep your feet on the ground – about shoulder width apart. This stance enhances the image of self-confidence and makes you look like you are comfortable, even if you’re not.
  + Hold your head up high.
  + It’s okay to use your head to communicate, but for the most part, hold your head erect.

**Poise**

* This refers to the self-assured manner you want to project. It goes along with posture, but includes other things as well.
* Avoid distracting mannerisms such as clicking a pen cap on and off; rocking back and forth; taking your glasses on and off; scratching, etc.

**Movement**

* Balance standing still and moving. Generally, in a presentation, stand in one place unless there’s a good reason to move around. For example, to add a little action and excitement to your speech.
* Moving out into the audience – opportunities for more eye contact, personal contact can help you regain attention you may have lost.

**Gestures**

* The way you move your hands, arms, and fingers.
* If you fail to gesture while speaking, you may be perceived as boring and stiff. A lively speaking style captures attention, makes the material more interesting, and facilitates understanding.
* Use to describe or emphasize. “It was about this big” creates an expectation of an associated hand gesture.
* It needs to be natural – if you don’t normally use gestures, just let your hands hang freely at your sides, maybe with one elbow slightly bent.
* Never put your hands in your pockets.

**Using Effective Facial Expressions**

* Your face has the power to express your innermost feelings and emotions as well as your ideas and to emphasize and underscore your main ideas.
  + Example: How are you feeling today? Fine [have sad or pained face]
* In a presentation, your face should be an open book.
* Use facial expressions to communicate your ideas.
  + [Say this statement two times, varying facial expressions.] “This is absolutely the most exciting development in the history of our industry. I can’t tell you how pleased I am that our company is on its cutting edge.”
* Animate your face.
* Expressions have to be real – don’t force them.
* Practice in front of a mirror or try videotaping yourself. Try different expressions until you find the one that most clearly communicates your ideas.
* Change it up – eyebrows, eyes, cheeks, mouth, lips, nose, neck, teeth – all of them can help communicate emotions and attitudes.
* Smile
* It’s your smile you want your audience members to take home with them.
* Don’t fake it!
* Even if the material’s not funny, a smile conveys that you’re a friendly person, that you enjoy being with them, and that you care about the information you’re giving them.
* It’s good for you, too. Helps you relax, feel more confident.
* If it’s not your nature to smile, try putting happy face stickers on your note cards as a reminder.

**Conclusion: Write Your Own Conclusion**