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# THE ART OF COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATION SKILLS  
&  
BODY LANGUAGE SECRETS



DR. ROY  
NARAIN

THE ART OF COMMUNICATION

Communication Skills

&

BODY LANGUAGE SECRETS

**DR. ROY NARAIN**

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Udemy audiovisual course review:

*"This instructor is an excellent communicator. I am enjoying the course very much. I don't think it even needs a rating, except for visibility, as his communication skills and the content of the course speak for themselves. He reminds me of a teacher I had in university, the Dean of our Journalism Faculty, whose class I rarely skipped. I used to get so sad when I couldn't attend it; I would simply run just to get there in time so I could spend some more time in his presence and listen to his wonderful expression. The power to convey one's message is essential. There are many talents and ideas out there, but without effective communication skills they simply cannot fully express. Thank you for this course."*

Luiza Covaliciuc, Journalist

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# INTRODUCTION

Communication is the art of interaction between two or more people, both verbally and non-verbally, so that the message that is being conveyed is understood in exactly the same way as was intended. Now, this is my personal, formal definition of communication, but let me try to be a bit more simplistic. If you and I are communicating with each other, I need to understand exactly what your intention is and you need to understand the message I am sending to you in order to stimulate the required reaction. Unfortunately, in many cases the message that is moving from one person to another is so complicated or packed so tightly, that it is impossible to unzip. And we all know or remember what this will cause. It will cause misunderstanding, and misunderstanding leads to disaster. Ask yourself how many times you have felt remorseful after a conversation. How many times have you felt infuriated? Or worse, how many times have you degraded a co-worker or a subordinate at work? Well it's time to stop and make amendments in order to become a more refined communicator. This in turn will give you more pleasure when interacting with others.

The power of perceptiveness and intuition plays an important role in communications. It is the ability to pick up the non-verbal signals that are transmitted to us and compare them with the verbal message. During the interaction with others, you may experience a strange inexplicable, gut feeling, lingering there somewhere below the surface of your consciousness mind. This is the subtle reminder that something is wrong, that something is out of place. Your interlocutor may be lying or simply disinterested or in disagreement with what you are saying. The reason why we experience this strange gut feeling is because people unconsciously send out unlimited non-verbal signals during their interaction with others. These signals are picked up and translated by our subconscious mind, which works like a dictionary. So, does it mean that we should trust our

subconscious mind to decrypt the message that the speaker is sending to us? Of course, we should.

However, in addition to this, we need to go one step further to ensure that we are effective and precise in our judgement of people's hidden purpose during our interaction. We need to develop the ability to consciously read the signals transmitted by their bodies. Should we master this, then we are on the right path to becoming great communicators. Remember, if you are able to translate people's non-verbal signals to more readable messages, then it will be easier for you to manage the signals you are emitting. So, what exactly do we mean when we talk about non-verbal signals or body language?

Body Language is a hurricane of signals flowing from your body. These signals are displayed by means of facial expressions, eye movements, and body posture, as well as arm and hand gestures. It is also related to the amount of space the body requires and the way you touch others during the interaction. These are the signals that will announce people's true thoughts. These are the signals that will reveal their feelings and intentions. If you are able to understand and interpret these signals, then you are on your way to unriddling people's true identity. Your face-to-face encounter will not be preceded anymore by the feeling of apprehension and uncertainty, and your self-confidence will surely increase. This in turn will open the door to success in any undertaking involving people. In addition, when you make your own non-verbal signals appropriate, you will reinforce your communication skills and hence improve your relationship with others.

People formulate an opinion of you during the first few minutes of the conversation. And their opinion is predominantly based on what they see. They rely on the story that is being told by the body and not by the vocal chords. During the conversation, they may therefore experience a strange feeling that the speaker is being insincere. This is simply because the body is broadcasting signals that contradict the verbal message. However, in other cases, the body movements may be in cohesion with the verbal content. This will indeed strengthen the message the speaker is conveying. As a result, it will be easier to capture and keep people's attention and gain

their respect and admiration. Remember, it is not what you say. It is how you use your body to embellish your message. This is why I have divided this book into four sections.

In the first section, I will talk about the different body signals that we send out during our encounter, as well as what we should do with our body in order to enhance our communication skills. Unfortunately, many people do not know what to do with their body during the conversation and end up sending the wrong signals to their interlocutors. I believe that the hands pose a big problem for the majority of people when interacting with others. This is why I will pay special attention to the handshake and gesticulations. In the second section of this book, I will put more emphasis on the verbal aspect of communication. Paradoxically, the verbal part of your communication is not inextricably linked to the words you use, but how you relay your message, how you express yourself. As strange as it may sound, the verbal communication is also related to what you do not say and how good you make people feel in your company. In fact, it's better to speak less and listen more to create a lasting impression on others.

Communication is not only related to mutual interaction between people. You may have situations in your life when you need to present your work to a group of people in your company and you need to draw and keep their attention to get your message across. Failure to do so may have a negative impact on your career. In other cases, you may have to make a speech at a social event and end up backing out because you lack knowledge or confidence on how to present yourself. It is widely known that the majority of people would prefer to die than speak up in front of a group of people. The mere thought of doing so produces a chain reaction that overwhelms both the body and mind and leaves them cringing in fear. This is why I have reserved some space in this book to show you how to enhance your presentation skills. In order to become a master communicator, you need to know how to mix and mingle with people. However, it is essential for you to be able to convey your message during a public speech.

Finally, if you want to become a master communicator, you need to be perceptive enough to know when others are lying to you. Section 4 will allow you to gain the ability to spot liars during both your social and professional interactions. Once you are able to decrypt people's true intentions, life becomes easier. It is better to know where you stand and who you can rely on.

This book has been written to allow people of all walks of life to boost their communication skills, achieve personal and professional success and improve the quality of their lives.

Thank you for purchasing this book. I hope you will enjoy spending the time with me and I am sure that by the time you get to the last chapter, you will have enhanced your communication skills. So, fasten your seat belt and let's begin the journey to improve your communication skills and live a better life.

## SECTION 1

# **NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

# 1. GETTING STARTED

## Create a Lasting First Impression

Being a great communicator is not only connected to the way you express yourself or the way you gesticulate or the amount of eye contact you maintain. It is also related to the way you generally carry yourself. It is the way you are dressed and the way you stand and walk. This comes in handy when you are delivering a presentation or being interviewed for a job or when you are interacting with inhabitants of the corporate jungle.

Do you remember how irritated your parents, grandparents and teachers became whenever you happened to slouch? Every time you lower your head, slump your shoulders, hunch your back and walk sluggishly, you give the impression that you are a loser. The lack of vitality in your body will repel others.

Learn to stand and walk with your head held high and your shoulders thrown back and straightened. Inject energy in the muscles of your body to generate a lively posture. This is the look of people with success. They stand and walk with confidence. They put both energy and pace into their strides and they walk with an intention. They captivate and sustain the attention of their audience. Do exactly the same and you will attract people and gain their respect and admiration.

Now, considering that you have mastered the way you stand and walk, let's put the final element into place. It is the way you dress.

Do you remember the famous proverb which states that clothes make the man? Well, this one has great significance because it determines whether the first impression you make on others is positive or negative. People usually formulate their opinion of you within the first few minutes of the encounter. Believe me, this opinion will be indelibly imprinted in their memory.

If your posture is correct, your walk is perfect and your attire is without flaw, then you are on the way to capturing people's heart and influencing them. You see, if you are dressed properly, you feel good, you feel important, you feel like a person with substance. Your self-esteem elevates and people will detect this. So, regardless of where you are going, never leave your home if you do not feel satisfied with the way you are dressed. Regardless of whether you are in a hurry or not, please reserve enough time to groom yourself properly. It pays to be slick and clean because it paves the way to proper communication.

The well-dressed individual is portraying that he or she is important, intelligent, reliable, trustworthy and, of course, a winner. The scruffy-looking individual is silently screaming to the public that he or she is unimportant, with no purpose in life. They give us the perception that they can be controlled, manipulated and treated with disrespect.

To recapitulate, you have acquired three important things. You have the right posture, the right walk and the right clothes. Now, look at yourself in the mirror and tell yourself that you look good and feel good before leaving home to tackle the outside world. Many people, especially women, refrain from looking at themselves in the mirror. If they do so, they concentrate mostly on their physical defects. When they eventually leave home, the picture of their physical defects remains in their minds. It's no wonder they find it difficult to emit positive energy. Whenever I admit to my students that I always look into the mirror and exchange a few nice, significant words with myself, they are astonished and at the same time amused. However, I have never noticed despise in their eyes, nor am I ever accused of being narcissistic. In fact, I notice the comprehension and respect that creep into their eyes every time I make this statement. They tell me that they admire me for having the awareness to seek and find the right things in myself.

Remember, seek and you will find. Seek attributes and you will discover attributes that will make you feel good in your own company. Seek flaws and you will discover flaws that will repel you from yourself. If you feel good in your own company, people will feel likewise and it becomes easier to communicate. If you repel yourself from yourself, then you will repel

others and communication becomes the necessary evil. If communication becomes the necessary evil, you may not even be given the chance to get engaged in small talk.

## Inborn Gestures

People smile genuinely when they feel happy, content or when they recall or envision a cheerful situation. The smile covers the whole face and puts warmth into the eyes. The mere fact that the smiling expression appears on the faces of children who were born blind proves that it is an inborn gesture that is triggered by the brain. In fact, if you close your eyes and think about something pleasant, the smile will automatically appear. Other facial gestures that are simply a reflection of our feelings are also involuntary. It is therefore conceivable that different cultures across the globe will use the same basic facial signals to expose their emotions.

It is the same with the arm-fold gesture, which is considered to be genetically inherited. The arm-fold gesture is the act of crossing one arm over the other on the chest. Whenever this gesture is induced, the same arm, right or left, will always be on top of the other. In fact, people find it extremely difficult to correctly define which one of their arms is usually placed on top. They need to actually execute this action in order to find out.

Try this experiment. Firstly, fold your arms without thinking about it. Afterwards, determine which arm is on the top. This particular arm-fold will produce a feeling of comfort and everything seems to have fallen into place. Now try to cross your arms again, but with the other arm on top. Is it easy to accomplish? Of course not. You find yourself thinking and trying several times before you eventually get the required result. How does it make you feel after you have accomplished this? You feel strange, awkward, out of place. You feel as if something was wrong. And this is

simply because you have placed the wrong arm on top of the other. The arm-fold gesture is genetically transferred and we have no influence on this body movement.

Whenever we feel insecure or intimidated or we disagree with our interlocutor, the brain sends a command to the limbs. This results in the arms crossing over the chest to protect the heart and regain the feeling of comfort and security. Even though this gesture is a defensive mechanism, it leaves a negative impression on those with whom you are interacting and may therefore have a negative impact on the outcome of the interaction.

## 2. THE HANDSHAKE

### The Firm Handshake

The handshake is an act of interlocking your hand with the hand of another person and shaking it a few times. It is a gesture used when people greet each other or say good bye and is generally a sign of welcome. The initiator of the handshake will depend on the situation and circumstances. The general rule is that hierarchy takes precedence. Do not reach out impulsively to grab the hand of the President of the company. You will be imposing on him and may be perceived as being too cocky. Also, if you are a sales representative and have called on a buyer, then the buyer should initiate the handshake. Should the salesman initiate the handshake, then they would be imposing themselves on the buyer. As trivial as it may seem, it could have disastrous outcomes. So, use your common sense before reaching out to grab people's hands.

I would like to point out, however that we need to understand that the way the hand is positioned for the handshake may reflect a person's intention or attitude towards you. It may reflect what they want to achieve during the face to face encounter with other people. This is because the handshake is an eloquent reminder of your personality.

You may have noticed a variety of handshakes but have never stopped to consider the significance of each of them. So let's start with the firm handshake and the proper way it should be executed. Reach out to the other person with your palm in a vertical position and make sure you inject strength and energy in your hand so as to maintain a vice-like grip (Figure 1). This kind of handshake does not only signify a feeling of confidence, but also shows your respect to others and your readiness to initiate an equal relationship. This will pave the way to a fruitful discussion. You need to remember that the strength you inject in your palm must be adjustable, as you do not want to go about grinding people's knuckles or hurting them.



Fig. 1. The Firm Handshake

## The Horizontal Palm Down Handshake

The horizontal palm down handshake is the dominative handshake used by people of authority when they want to establish their higher position during the encounter (Figure 2). They are actually trying to beat you into submission with their hand and will not let go during the conversation. The dominative handshake is usually accompanied by an arrogant posture and behavior. They want to feel that they are in command of the situation.



Fig. 2. The Palm Down Handshake

I have only once in my life encountered the palm down handshake. The initiator was a female sales director of a multinational corporation, and an ex-student of mine. I met her at the reception desk on my way out of the company. When she saw me, she turned her whole body towards me and there was a sincere and welcoming smile on her face. She reached out to shake my hand, but her palm was facing down.

I succumbed because it suddenly dawned on me that her true intention was not to be dominative. I knew that because she had shown her respect and admiration to me on many occasions during our one-year course. It is just that she had acquired this handshake style through years of experience in the corporate jungle.

The message I am trying to convey here is that we should not jump too quickly to conclusions. We should not judge someone only on the basis of the dominative handshake. We need to compare with other non-verbal signals, understand the inner message being sent and then react appropriately. I think that is exactly what you need to learn. You need to know how to react to a palm down handshake.

Consider the example I just gave you, involving my ex-student. She respected and liked me and had welcomed me with open arms. Remember her body was facing me, her smile was genuine and her eyes were emitting the warmth she felt. She was indeed interested in exchanging a few words with me. The mutual relationship was good and I had also respected her for her strength and perseverance to strive forward in the corporate job.

So what did I do? I gave in by responding to her handshake with my palm facing up. However, should the initiator of the palm down handshake belong to the aggressive, alpha type, then my advice would be to allow yourself to be forced into a submissive position with your palm facing up. Then instantly place your left hand on top of the dominator's hand. In this way you show them that you have seen through them and have decoded their intentions. The aggressor will lose their composure and will most likely feel embarrassed. Depending on the circumstances and your relationship with the aggressor, you close off with or without a smile.

## **The Palm up Handshake**

The palm up handshake is a submissive position that is forced upon you by the aggressor or person seeking domination (Figure 3). Of course, the aggressor will be using the palm down handshake. When you react with your palm facing up, you are conveying your agreement to be controlled. You are sending the subliminal message that you are submissive. You do not pose a serious threat to them.



Fig. 3. The Palm Up Handshake

Now, I would like to punctuate one very important point. Some people naturally use the palm up handshake, regardless of whether it has been forced upon them or not. This type of handshake could have been acquired due to inferiority complex and low self-esteem. Hence, the owner of the handshake will willingly and unconsciously succumb and allow themselves to be maneuvered during the encounter.

There is one particular situation when you may have to use the submissive handshake to make someone feel that they are in control of the situation. And this is at your workplace.

If your boss happens to belong to the dominative type and initiates the dominative handshake, then it would be wise for you to respond with the palm up handshake. Due to the hierarchical business structure, it would be foolhardy to hand wrestle with your dominative boss unless you feel the irresistible urge to leave the company. Having said that, I would like you

to be aware that politicians usually initiate the palm up hand shake during close encounters with the public. They want to show that they are humble, they are trustworthy and they respect you. They are like the pleading beggars looking up to you, looking up to the voters. This is intentional and done with premeditation to capture the hearts of the voters. This will increase people's affinity to the politicians and may make a big difference during elections.

So, if politicians are prepared to use this kind of handshake as a powerful tool, then why should you try to be different? Politicians swallow their pride for a good cause. So, why shouldn't you do likewise when the necessity arises?

My way of thinking is simple. If you have knowledge and you understand the meaning of the palm down and palm up handshake, it means that you have control. Once you have control, you can decide whether to react, when to react and how to react. If you know who you are, you do not have to scream out loudly to show your inner values. So, from time to time, you may have to swallow your pride and use the submissive handshake just to make others feel good. When this happens, it becomes easier to communicate.

## **Status Non Erectus**

Some psychologists call it the dead fish handshake or the limp handshake. I personally refer to this deviation as Status Non Erectus (Figure 4). Think about it. What will come across people's mind if your hand were not fully erect, and at the same time cold and clammy? They would believe that the owner of the handshake were insecure, with low self-esteem. They were fragile and would allow you to control them.



Fig. 4. Status Non Erectus

During the years of conducting self-improvement courses, I have interacted with hundreds of people. So, I can firmly claim that I have empirical evidence of how the dead-fish hand shaker is perceived by the public. The description is always the same; weak character, lack of confidence, two-facedness, indecision and unreliability. When I ask them about the feelings the limp handshake evoked, the answer is always the same; repulsion, lack of respect, distaste and hideousness.

Others observed, however, that they felt that the initiator of the dead fish hand shake was disrespectful, disinterested in the interaction and was sending the subliminal message of despise. They are saying, "I don't care about you and I will not even take the effort to energize and magnetize my handshake, because you are not worth it."

Surprisingly, during the years of analyzing the significance of the dead fish handshake, only a few people mentioned that it could be connected with the need to protect the hand. The argument is simple. If aggression

begets aggression, then a soft handshake will beget a soft handshake, which allows the initiator to protect their hands.

Regardless of the reason, pay careful attention to your handshake. If you happen to be a dead fish hand shaker, start working to change it into the vertical handshake. Please learn to inject energy and strength into your hand and maintain a firm grip. It will make a difference when communicating with others and you will not be perceived as repulsive. Getting rid of the dead fish habit is not so challenging and can be accomplished. The problem is how to get rid of clamminess on your hands. This is indeed challenging and this is what I will talk about in the next part. In the meantime, practice keeping your hand in the vertical position and work on putting strength and energy into it.

## **Hand Clamminess**

If you want to eliminate a defect you first need to find the source of the defect. There can be multiple reasons for clamminess. From a medical aspect, clamminess may be a result of hyperthyroidism. The function of the thyroid gland is to produce and secrete thyroid hormones called T3 and T4. I will not go into the intricacies of the thyroid gland and all the negative consequences its malfunction can have on our body, as this is not a book on internal medicine. All I would like to say is that the thyroid hormones regulate the metabolism of the body. Excessive secretion will increase metabolism and impact the sympathetic nervous system. This will lead to increase of heart beat, hyperactivity, fatigue, anxiety, irritability, tremor of the hands and of course, sweating, just to mention a few symptoms. It is the sweating that leaves the hands clammy.

Anxiety or anxiety neurosis may also lead to cold clammy hands and accompanying symptoms may be nervousness, the feeling of panic, lack of concentration and dryness of the mouth. As you can see, both cases require medical consultation, diagnosis and treatment, which is not the scope of this book. So, let's concentrate on normal everyday situations, which may lead to dampness of the hand.

Do you know what happens when you are about to encounter an unusual or difficult situation? It could be an interview. It could be a presentation or interaction with the upper echelons. Let me tell you what happens. You will most likely feel stressed, your mouth becomes dry, your heart starts to beat faster or even skips a few significant beats, your blood pressure escalates and you run to the washroom a few times.

No one will notice the dryness in your mouth unless you start to gulp down glasses of water one after the other. No one will probably notice that your poor heart has exceeded its speed limit. And probably no one will notice that your blood pressure has gone sky high, unless you start to flush. However, when you reach out to shake hands, they will feel the tremor and the clamminess.

The solution to this embarrassing problem is simple. Prepare yourself mentally for the meeting by using the law of auto-suggestion. This means that you should envision and mentally rehearse the upcoming situation in your mind's eye. Envision the situation, the event, the meeting, the presentation, the interview, whatever it may be. See yourself looking and feeling confident. See yourself going through all the steps of the presentation, going through all the steps of the interview, talking with the upper-echelons. See yourself feeling good, feeling energetic. You are smiling warmly and sincerely. The other participants are reacting in the same way. If you can envision the upcoming situation in your mind's eye over and over again, you are actually giving your brain ample time to become accustomed to the situation. When you go for the big event, your brain will lead you and manage your body and success is inevitable.

A few years ago, I came up with a solution that could be used in addition to auto-suggestion. I called it the HIP or Hand-In-Pocket solution. My students were shocked and amused by its simplicity. Nevertheless, their feedback proved that it worked like wonder. Basically, the idea is to nonchalantly push your hand in your pocket just before the encounter. Keep it there for a few seconds to allow your pocket to absorb the moisture and then, when pulling your hand out, press it tightly against your thigh for a last wipe. When your hand eventually emerges, it's dry and warm and ready to get engaged in the greeting.

There is also one simple thing we need to consider. Whenever you hold something, it could be a bag or a book, anything, your hand will start to perspire and become clammy. It is a natural reaction and is not connected to uneasiness. It is not connected to stress and for sure it is not connected to the fact that the production manager of the thyroid gland is over ambitious. It is simply a reaction when you touch something with your hand.

Now, I am too experienced and have managed and interacted with corporate workers for too long to be sweating in fear or apprehension. However, whenever I leave a company after consultations, I always hold my bag in my left hand. My right hand is free. It is warm. It is dry and it is waiting. Why do I adopt this behavior? It is because I know that before I reach the exit I would meet at least ten people who would stop to greet me. I just cannot allow my hand to be cold and clammy, because it may repel others. Believe me, regardless of how popular and respected you may be, nobody wants to place their hand on a wet, sweaty fish. It will keep them at a safe distance during the next encounter.

### 3. HAND MOVEMENTS

#### **Compelling Hand Movements**

The more authority you have, the more people would be inclined to listen to you without interruption. The hands can be used as a tool to establish your authority, enhance your communication and create harmony. By gesticulating, we capture the listener's attention and make it easier for them to understand and retain the message that is being sent. Studies have proven that it is easier to recall details of stories that are told using hand gestures.

We show our enthusiasm and engagement by moving our arms energetically. When you unconsciously expose your open palms at waist length or above to another person, you show them that you are honest, sincere and obedient (Figure 5). This will draw them into the conversation and increase their involvement. The open palm also helps you to become more calm and composed. It gives you an inexplicable balance.



Fig. 5. Palms Up

When we move one or both palms to the chest when speaking, we are literally drawing the listener towards us (Figure 6, 7). It therefore becomes easier for them to collaborate with us and accept our point of view because we are now on the same side.



Fig. 6. Palm to Chest Gesture



Fig. 7. Palms to Chest Gesture

When we place one or both hands in the handshake position, we are literally trying to shorten the distance, grasp the interlocutor's hand, shake it and pass on the message (Figure 8).

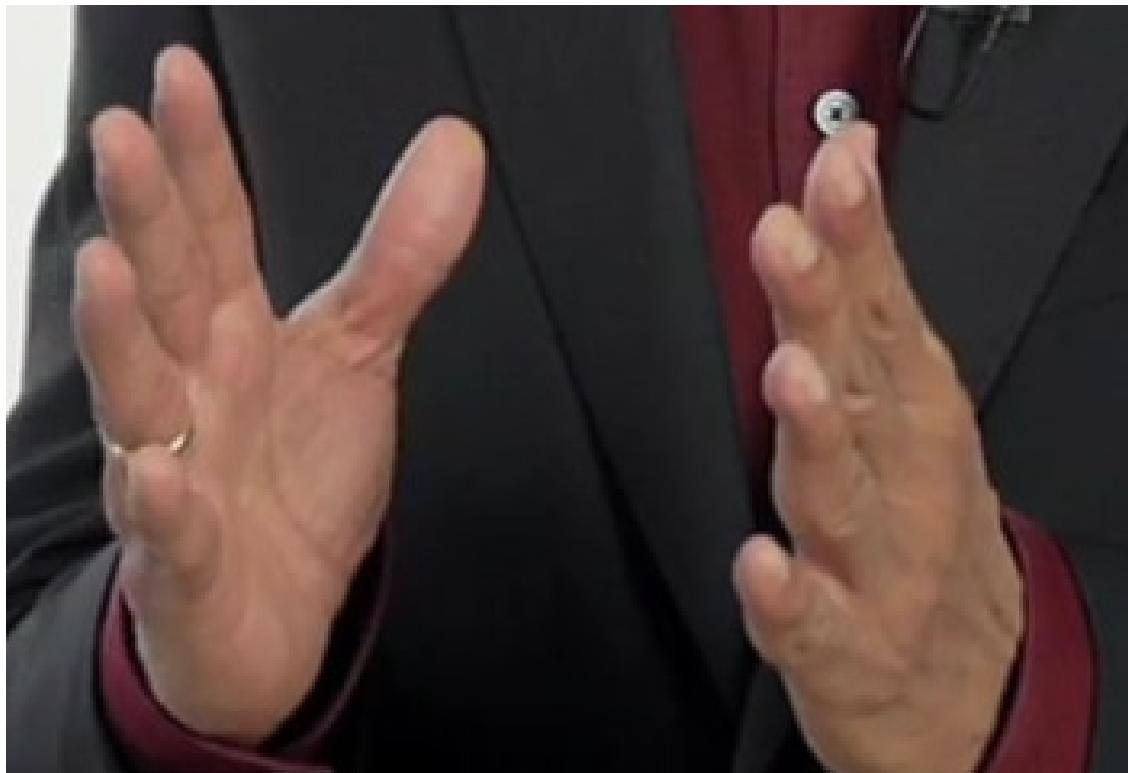


Fig. 8. The Handshake Gesture

When we want to put emphasis on a specific point, we bring the tips of the thumb and index finger to touch each other (Figure 9a).

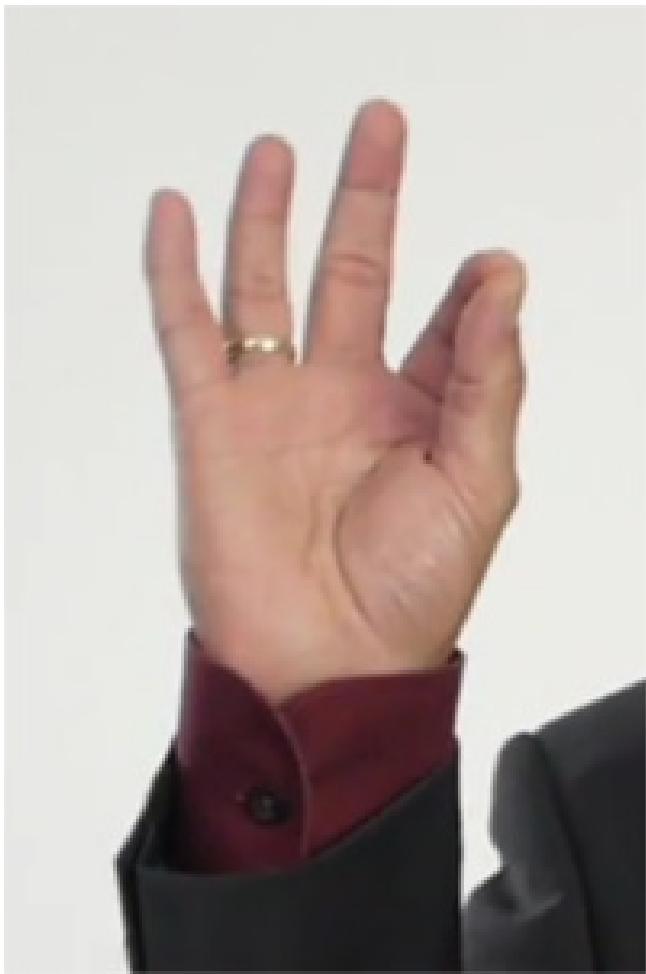


Fig. 9a. The Finger Touch Gesture

In some cases, more than one or all fingers will touch the tip of the thumb to punctuate the point (Figure 9b).



Fig. 9a. The Finger Touch Gesture

Rubbing the palms against each other shows positive expectations. However, the pace at which this happens is an indication of who will benefit from the situation. For example, if the car dealer rubs his palms together quickly and says that he has the right car and the right price for you, it means that he expects you to benefit from the transaction. However, if he rubbed his palms together slowly, it would mean that he was being duplicitous and expected to benefit from the deal. Of course, do not let yourself get carried away. The person rubbing his palms briskly together on a cold day is simply doing so to put warmth into his hands.

## **Hand Movements Reveal the Truth**

The numerous nerve connections between the hands and the brain allow the brain to control the movements of the hands. As a result, whatever goes on in the mind will be reflected in the hand movements.

Whenever a child tells a lie, both hands move up swiftly to cover the mouth. This is because the brain is sending signals to the hands, dictating them to cover the mouth and hence block the lie from leaping out. As we grow older, this gesture becomes more refined and therefore less obvious. Some adults may simply cover their mouth with their hand, with the thumb pressed on the cheek (Figure 10).



Fig. 10. The Mouth Cover

This is the least refined adult gesture. Please note that if the listener were using this gesture when you were talking, it would mean that they thought you were lying or they were showing their disapproval. It would be wise to stop blundering and ask them to comment on your statement. This would force them to remove the hand from the mouth and express their feelings. This in turn would allow you to take the appropriate action. In most cases, the hand will move up to the face more slowly and the fingers will delicately rub the region around the mouth or touch or rub the area below the nose in order to suppress the deceitful words (Figure 11).



Fig. 11. The Delicate Touch

Some liars will rub or touch their eye or the region below their eye (Figure 12). This is once again generated by the brain, which does not want the eyes to look at the person to whom they are lying.

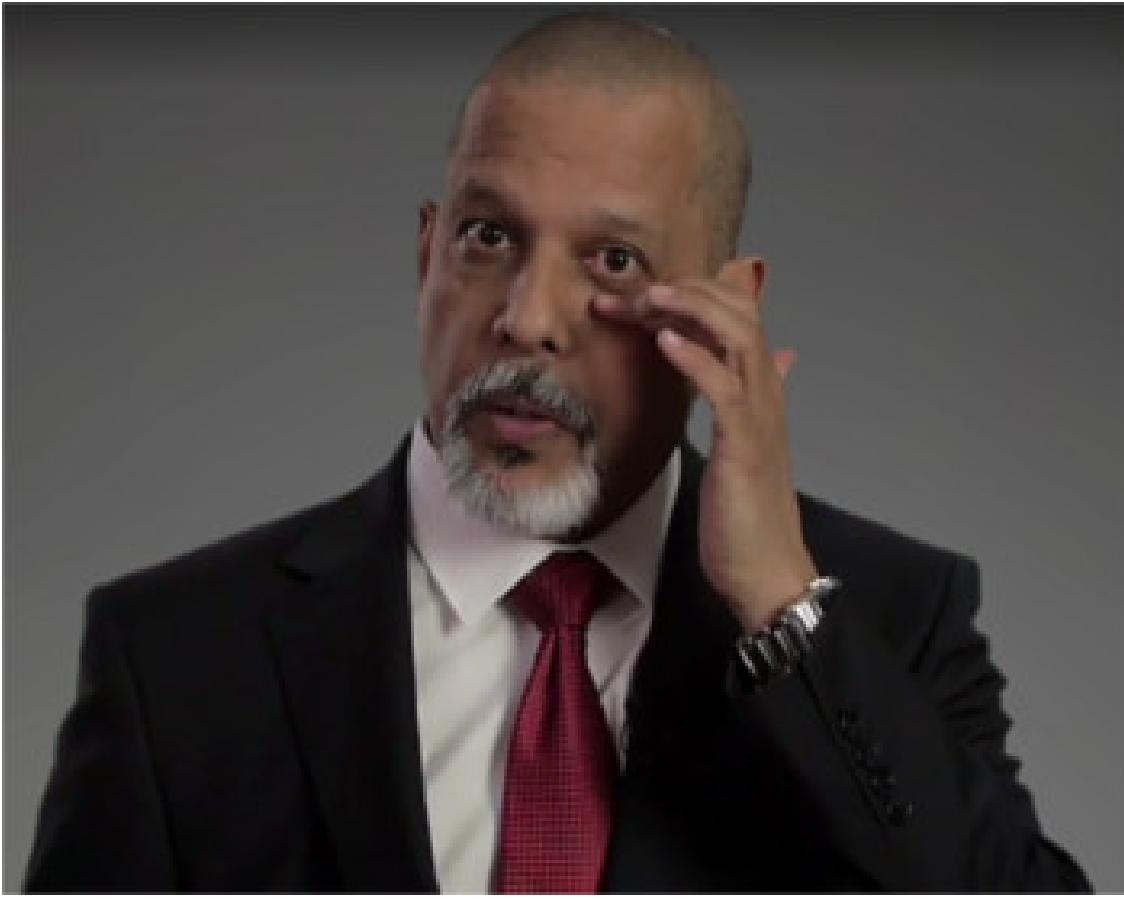


Fig. 12. The Eye Touch

So, let's say your boss is telling you that you have an excellent idea and that he will make use of it, but at the same time, his hand moves to hover around his eye or mouth. In this case, you would have to be careful. He may not be telling the truth. It's important to remember that if the listener were rubbing or touching their eye when you were speaking, it would mean that they felt you were lying and were trying to avoid looking at the liar. We human beings are too cultured and refined to cover the whole eye with the hand or just close the eyes. However, in extreme situations it may happen.

During the conversation, your so-called friend may not look at you, scratch his neck a few times and say, "I would like to say that I fully agree with you and I do understand the way you feel." Do not believe him.

If someone has told you a lie and suspects that you have decoded their true intention, they may pull at their collar using the index finger (Figure 13). They may say, for example, “Yes, I had a chance to go through the solution requirement document.” A split second later, they would pull at their collar. In this case, it would be better to make sure that they had indeed read the document.

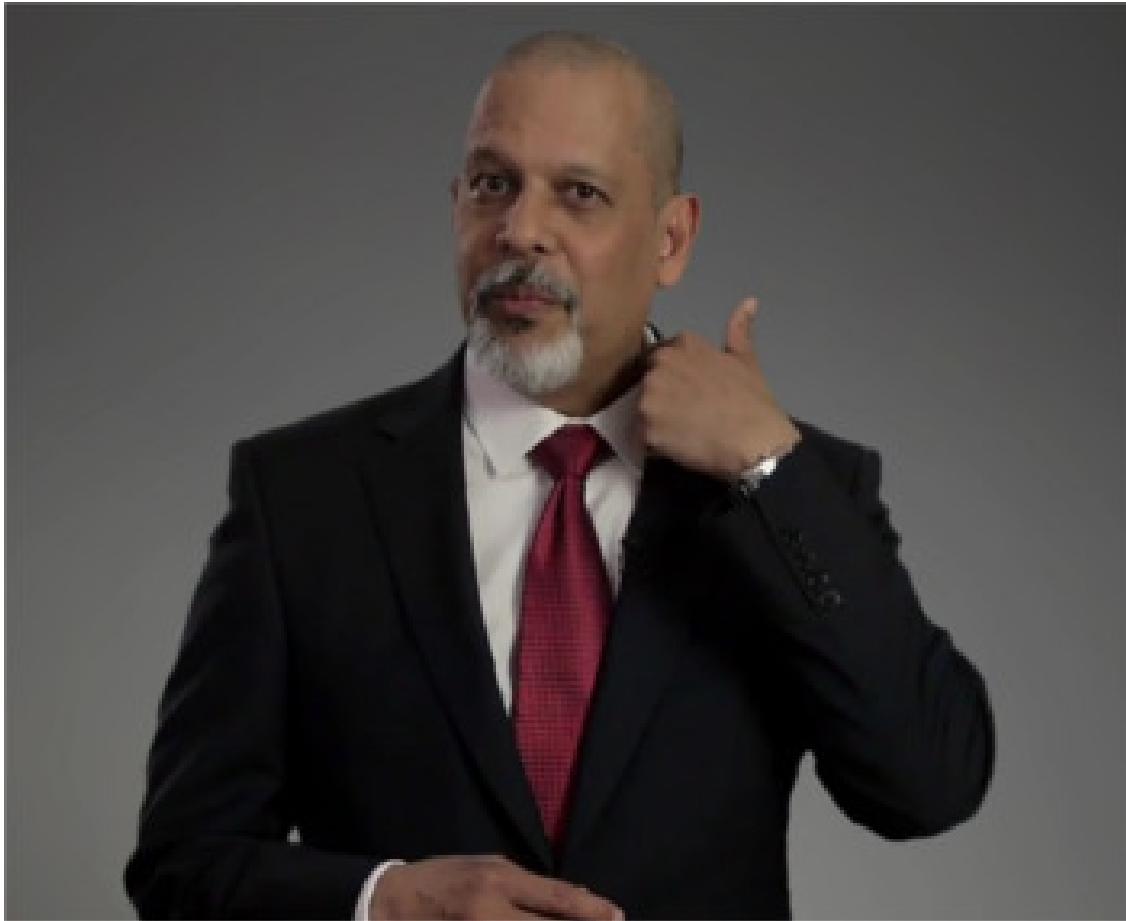


Fig. 13. The Collar Pull

When you are speaking, your conversation party may rub their ear, stretch the poor ear lobe, twist the whole ear to block the entrance or use their fingertip to drill around the internal surface. This indicates that they are trying to block the sound waves of your lies from reaching their ear drum (Figure 14). On the other hand, however, it may also mean that they have had enough of your speech and would like to express themselves. If you

ignore these signals, they will remain negative and hence unreceptive. This may destroy the communication protocol.



Fig. 14. The Ear Touch

Having pointed out the truth behind hand movements, it is important to underline that we should not jump to conclusions based on one gesture. We should not judge people based on one non-verbal signal. We should not analyze one non-verbal signal in isolation. We need to connect all the signals before we come to a conclusion. We should study the whole group of non-verbal signals before formulating an opinion. The more signals you

detect, the more accurate your interpretation. Remember, we will not understand a sentence by looking at one word.

## **Evaluation Gestures**

During our interaction with others we receive and rely on the audio-visual message that is sent by the speaker. Our brain picks up this message and reacts by emitting various evaluation gestures based on our emotional state. If you were giving a presentation, it would be very important to recognize and decode these gestures that are coming from the audience. It also comes in handy when promoting your service to a potential customer or pitching an idea to upper management. If you do not recognize these evaluation signals and their accompanying signals, it may lead to failure. If you, the listener, are engrossed and receptive to the content of the speech, you will place your hand on the cheek. The index finger rests casually on the cheek and points upwards. The thumb rests loosely at the side of the cheek and the remaining fingers are curled into an open fist. (Figure 15).

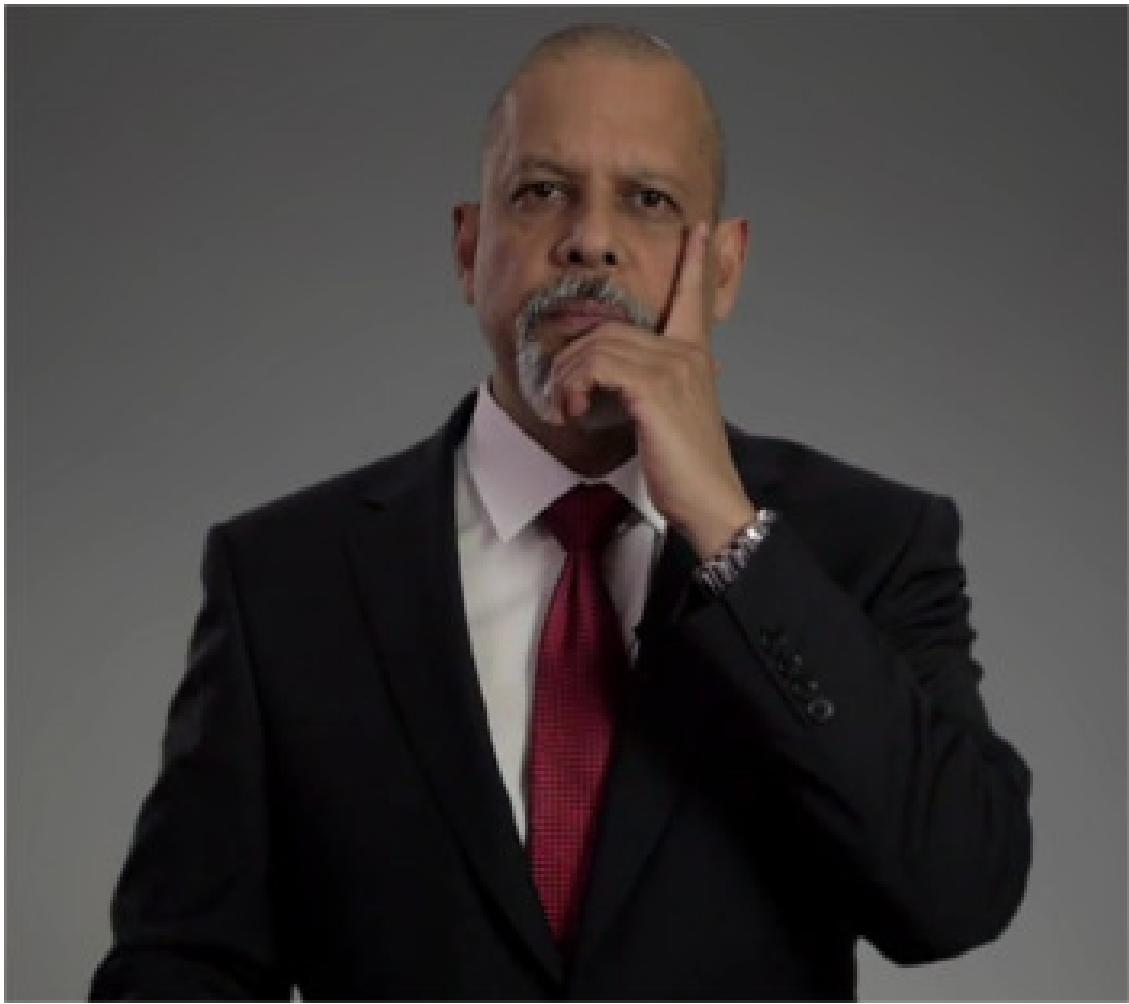


Fig. 15. The Attentive Gesture 1

When boredom starts to creep in, the curled fingers will open and all four fingers will be pointing upwards. The heel of the palm will support the chin, with the thumb alongside the jaw (Figure 16).

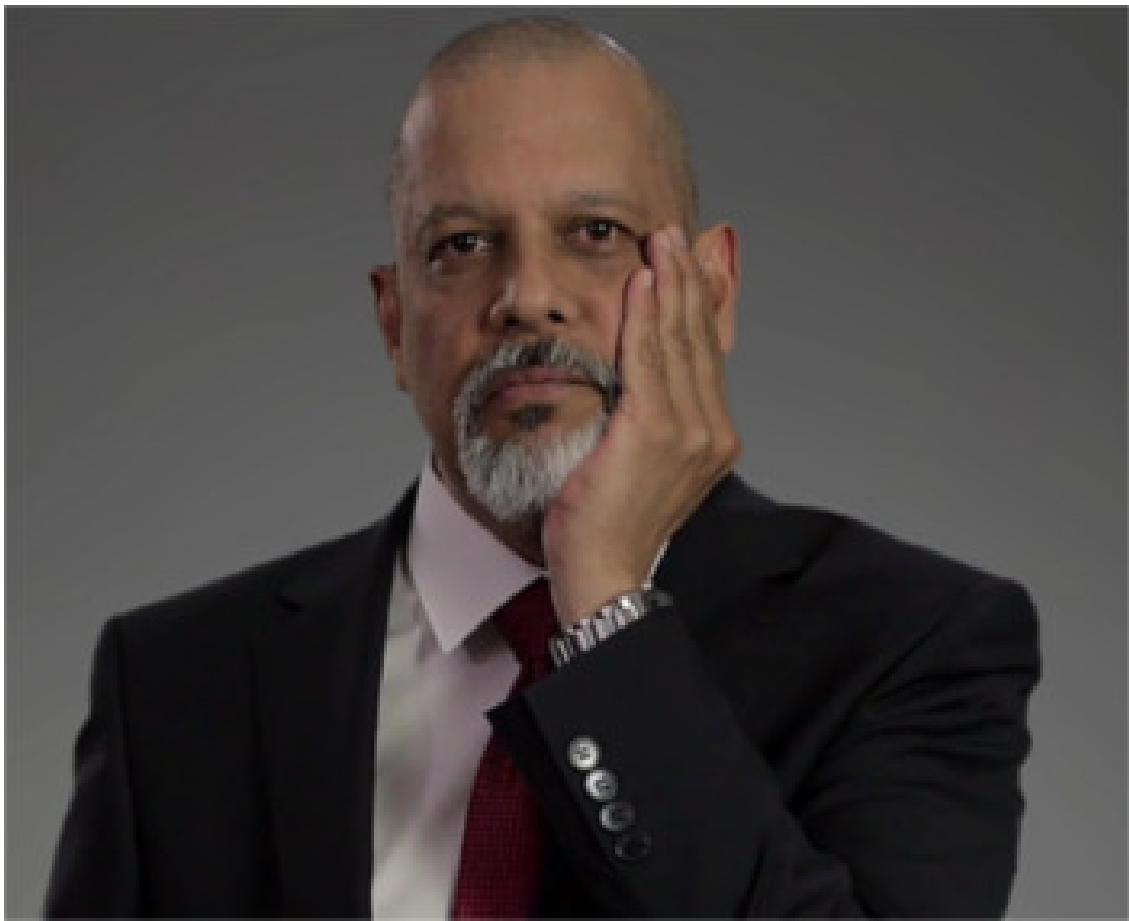


Fig. 16. The Bored Gesture

Alternatively, evaluation is also shown with the fingers curled into a closed fist and resting in front of the chin. The index finger points upwards, with the thumb resting loosely at the side of the cheek (Figure 17).

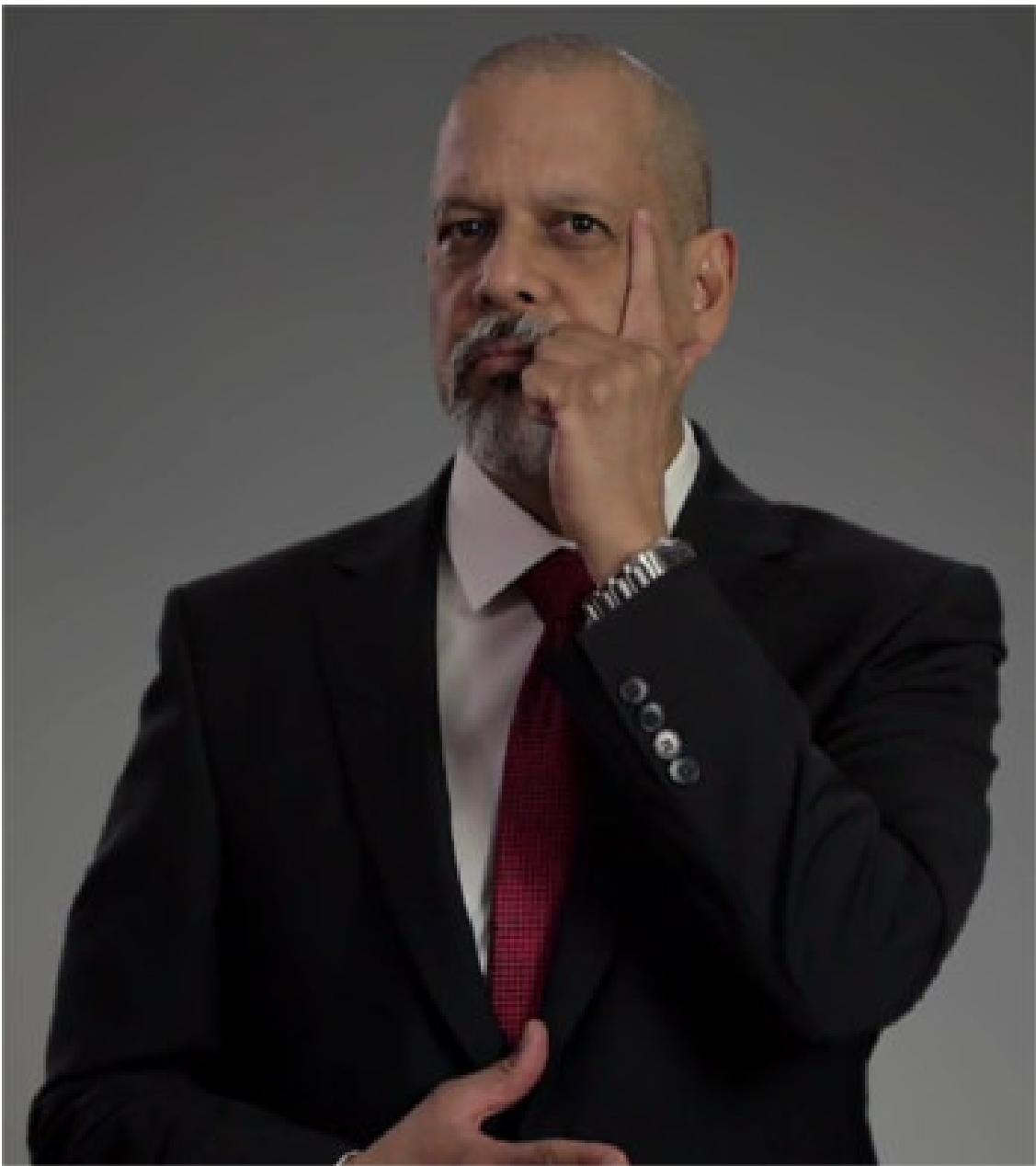


Fig. 17. The Attentive Gesture 2

When boredom starts to sink in, your body language will gradually change to convey your feelings. Your thumb will move under the chin to support your head and keep you awake. However, when you have reached your boredom threshold, the heel of the palm will move under the chin to assist the thumb to support your limp head. All the remaining fingers will now curl into a fist on the cheek, and you drift off to sleep (Figure 18).



Fig. 18. The Boredom Threshold

## Decision-Making Process

When someone is asked for their opinion, suggestion or solution to a problem, their hand will move to the chin and the chin stroking or beard stroking gesture is triggered (Figure 19). This gesture will surely buy them some additional time as everyone understands that the decision making process has started. They are weighing the pros and cons and trying to find a solution. If you were a sales representative, it would be foolhardy to interrupt. Simply wait and observe the non-verbal signals that follow.

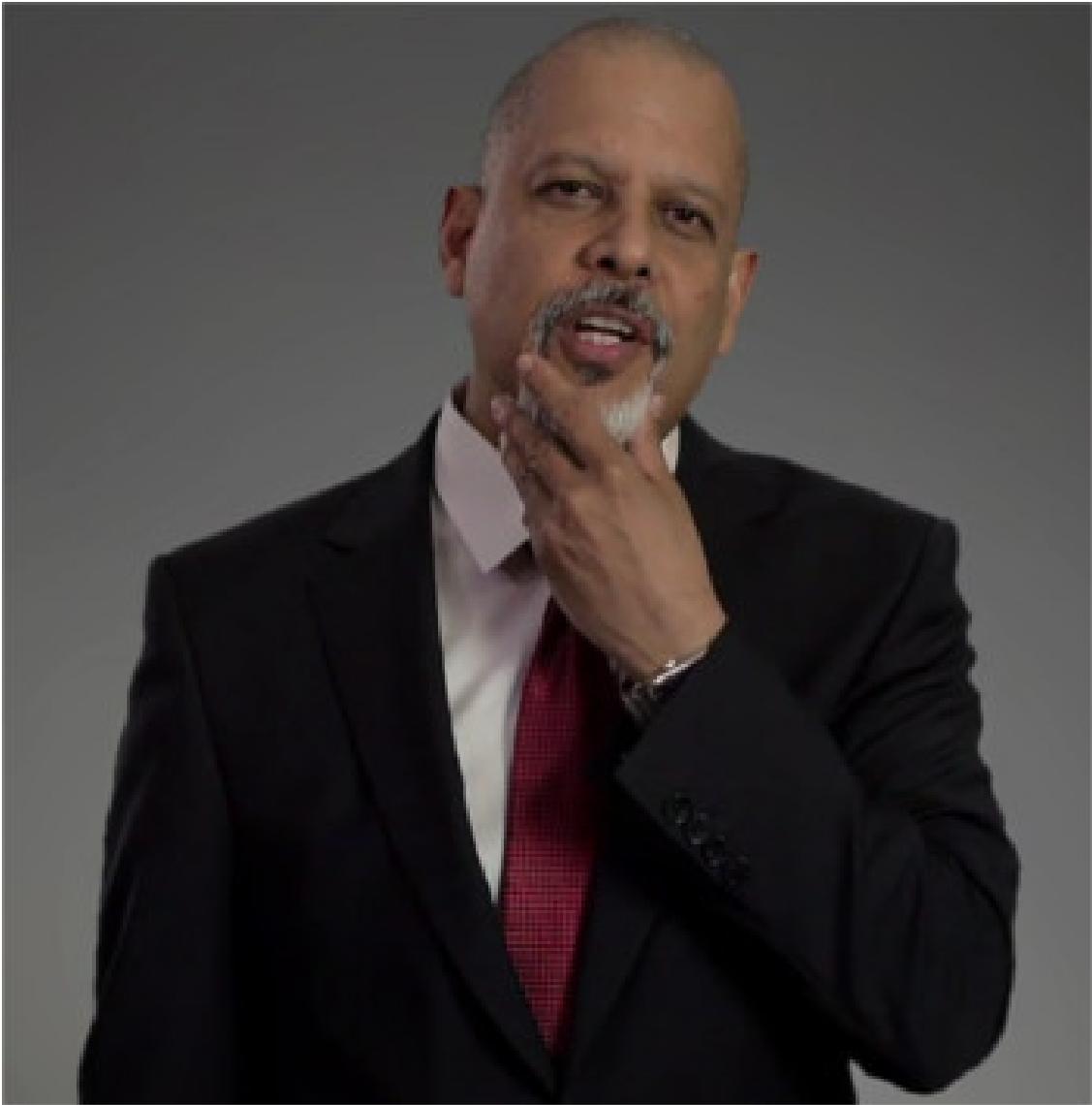


Fig. 19. The Chin Stroke

If negative gestures like sitting back, folding the arms or crossing the legs appear, it means that the verbal message that is about to follow will not be in your favor.

In this case, you should take quick action, break the silence and attempt to review one of the points you had made earlier. For example, you can lean forward, bow your head, open your arms, show your palms and say, “I see that you would like me to clarify something.”

This behavior will untie their arms and legs and make them more receptive. Remember, once the No is verbalized, it will be impossible or very difficult to bring them back into a receptive mood and make them change their minds. The bottom line is to detect the No before it leaves the mouth. If the chin stroking is followed by positive gestures like sitting forward or leaning forward, with open arms and a smile, then it would mean that the decision would be in your favor.

If someone is wearing glasses they may not use the chin stroking decision-making gesture. Instead, they may take off their glasses and put one arm of the frame in their mouth. People who smoke pipes will put the pipe in their mouth. Others may simply chew on their pens or pencils.

They will keep these objects in or around their mouths until a decision has been reached. These are all extensions of the childhood nipple-sucking and thumb-sucking. The sucking reflex evokes a soothing feeling and makes them more reassured before making the decision. The accompanying signals will reveal the results of their contemplation.

## The Sucking Reflex

Researches have shown that some non-verbal signals are inborn or genetically transported, whereas others are learned or acquired. For example, a newborn baby has a natural urge to suck their mom's nipple or their own fingers. This is called the sucking reflex that began way back inside the womb of their mother. Now this clearly demonstrates that the sucking reflex is either inborn or genetic. In addition to the intake of milk, it evokes a soothing effect. As a result, the baby regains the feeling of safety and harmony that was provided in the mother's womb.

The sucking reflex becomes more refined as we grow older. Adults will not suck their fingers when they want to calm and comfort themselves in distressing situations. It simply does not behoove an adult to behave like that. Instead, they would put an object on their lips or in their mouth. And the object would be whatever they have within reach. It could be a pen,

pencil, pipe or the arm of their glasses. I vividly remember the reaction of an ex-soldier whom I had been coaching. He was well-built, confident and gave the impression that he was a man with high self-esteem. Even though it was not necessary, he always had a notebook and pen within reach.

Every time he found himself in an uncomfortable situation or had to analyze something, he inserted the pen into his mouth. The reaction was swift, instantaneous and involuntary and the pen was kept in his mouth until he regained the feeling of security or had come up with a solution. It was beyond his control and he was totally unaware of this reflex until I brought it to his attention. It was then that he made it his duty to consciously work on himself to eliminate this gesture. After all, no one wants to be seen inserting different objects into their mouth during their interaction with others, be it a social or business encounter.

## 4. ARM/HAND GESTURES

### The Arm-Fold Gesture

The arm-fold gesture is the act of crossing the arms over the chest and hiding your hand or hands under the upper arms (Figure 20). This is the position we adopt when we disagree with someone or feel insecure or threatened in their company. By covering the chest, we protect our heart and regain the feeling of safety. However, by doing so we look angry and negative.



Fig. 20. The Arm Fold

If you noticed that someone were using this gesture when you were speaking, you would have to take the right measures to unfold their arms and make them more receptive. A simple technique would be to lean forward with a smile, open your arms with your palms facing up and say, for example, “What do you think about my idea? Would you like further clarification?” Remember, as long as the arms remain cross, there will be a barrier that prevents proper and sincere communication. If the arm-fold is accompanied by clenched fists (Figure 21) or the upper arms are tightly gripped by the hands, it would signify greater animosity and resistance (Figure 22). If it is accompanied with the thumbs pointing upwards, it denotes a negative or defensive attitude. At the same time, it reflects an air of confidence, authority and superiority (Figure 23).



Fig. 21. Arm Fold 1



Fig. 22. Arm Fold 2



Fig. 23. Arm Fold 3

As the arm-fold gesture is a bit too obvious, it is sometimes replaced by the partial arm-fold gesture. It is often used at social get-togethers by shy people when they interact with strangers. It is also used when people are intimidated. One arm will move across the body to grab hold of the other arm to form a defensive wall (Figure 24) or both arms will cover the pelvic region, with one hand placed on top of the other. In some cases, one arm may move across the body to fiddle with the cuff or adjust the watch or finger ring (Figure 25).



Fig. 24. The Partial Arm Fold 1



Fig. 25. The Partial Arm Fold 2

Some people use both hands to hold on to their glass or cup to create the defensive wall. The next time you go to a party, observe how people's body language changes under the influence of alcohol. When the sober guy walks across the room to ask the gorgeously looking girl for a dance, he will fiddle with his cuff, watch or ring. He will create a barrier to protect the chest so as to feel more secure. However, after a few shots, he staggers boldly across the room with his arms widely open, his palms facing up and a playful smile on his face. Please do not misunderstand me because my intention is not to promote the usage of alcohol. However, upon its consumption, the necessity to create a defensive wall simply disappears. We become more open, outgoing and expansive. In the next part, I will give you more examples of gestures that you should perceive and decrypt. This will help you to detect people's true intentions and be in control of the conversation.

## The Hand Clench

This gesture is used to suppress frustration, hostility or anxiety and at the same time display confidence. It may occur when you are trying to convey your point of view and notice that you are unable to convince the listener. The hands may be clenched in front of the face at chin's height, with the elbows resting on the desk (Figure 26).



Fig. 26. The Hand Clench

The clenched-hands may rest on the desk or on the lap when you are seated or held in front of the pelvic region when standing. By doing so, the person is able to regain the feeling of security and confidence. It has been observed that the higher the hands are held, the more negative the initiator's mood. This gesture can be misleading because the smile that

usually accompanies it makes the initiator look confident.

## The Akimbo Gesture

The arms are bent at the elbows, with the palms resting on the hips (Figure 27). This gesture reflects the person's intention to jump into action. It says, "I am ready to tackle the problem" or "I am prepared to deal with the subordinate who has overstepped the mark." If you are standing too close to someone or you have entered their territory, then they would also use this gesture. They are non-verbally saying, "You have trespassed on my territorial zone and you dare not take another step forward without my permission." Pushing the elbows to the sides and exposing the heart will make them look bigger and more indomitable.



Fig. 27. The Akimbo Gesture

## The Neck Massage

If someone rubs or massages the back of their neck and looks down when talking to you, it most likely means that they are lying (Figure 28).

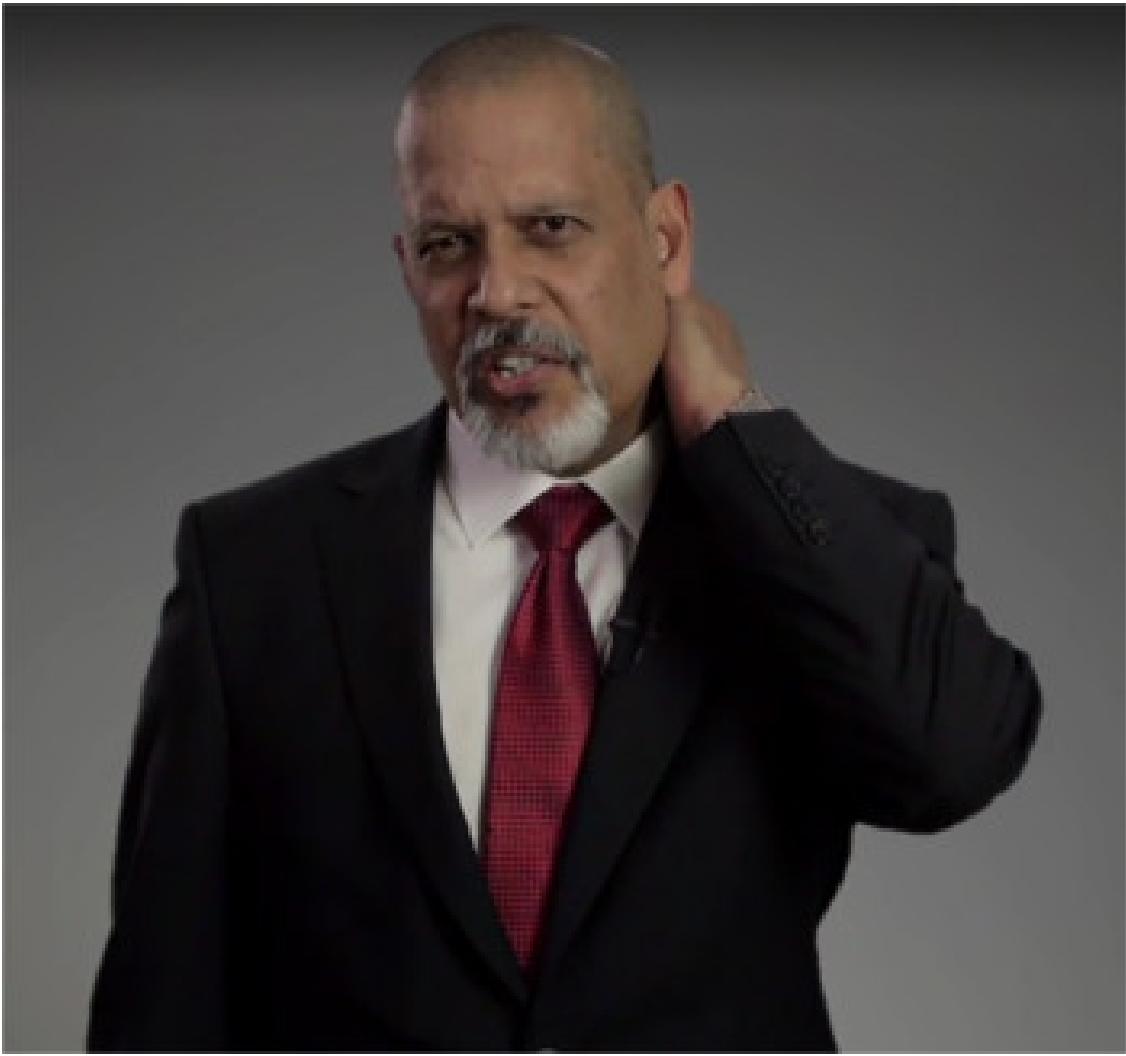


Fig. 28. The Neck Rub

This gesture may also be a reflection of negative feelings. If you are frustrated, critical, and angry or feel intimidated, the neck rub may be

preceded by a slap. For example, if you have revealed someone's error during a discussion, the person may first slap their neck and then begin the neck massage. They are non-verbally showing their annoyance and telling you that you are being a real pain in the neck for mentioning their blunder. For example, they may slap and then rub their neck and say, "Yes, that's true. I should have reviewed the software specifications before the meeting." However, if the person slaps their forehead, they are non-verbally communicating that they have recognized their flaw (Figure 29). They are not intimidated or displeased by the fact that you have brought it to their attention. For example, they slap their forehead and say, "Exactly, I should have reviewed the software specifications before the meeting." People who slap their foreheads are perceived as being out-going and flexible.

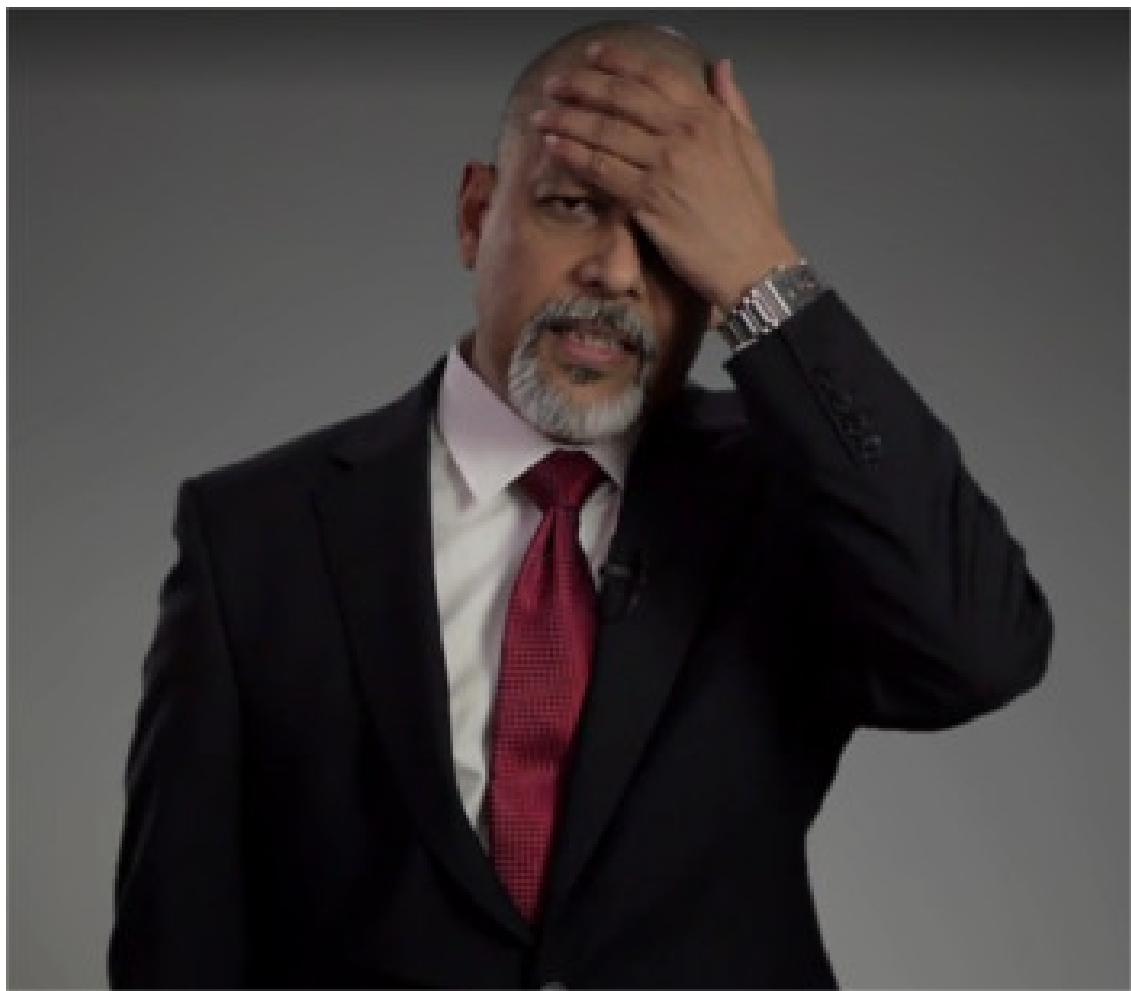


Fig. 29. The Forehead Slap

## **Hands Behind Head**

When someone sits back in their chair and clasp their hands behind their head, they are non-verbally communicating their strength, confidence and superiority. This condescending attitude is often adopted by the boss who wants to show his subordinates that he is more intelligent and more important. He has the answers to all questions.

## **The Chopping Gesture**

The hand chop is the act of moving one hand up and down to beat the palm of the other hand (Figure 30). This is an authoritative gesture that is used to put emphasis on a statement. However, if used in an aggressive way, it may unsettle the audience. It's like saying, "I am going to beat the message into you." I personally prefer to use the finger countdown gesture, where one finger is used to beat the other finger to increase the impact of the statement (Figure 31).



Fig. 30. The Hand Chop



Fig. 31. The Finger Countdown

### The Invisible Hands

Some people stand and walk with one hand holding the other behind the back. The head is held high and the chest and pelvic regions are fully exposed as an act of fearlessness. They are unconsciously sending the message that they are strong, confident and in full control of the situation. This gesture is used by police officers wearing weapons, headmasters, school teachers and the authoritative boss or anyone wanting to show their authority during the conversation. As long as they maintain this posture, it would be difficult to get your point across. In this case, it would be better

to gesticulate with your open palms more often. This should make them less authoritative and more receptive during the discussion.

Some people may hold the wrist of the other hand behind their back. This would mean that they were trying to restrain a negative attitude. They could be nervous, frustrated or angry and were making an attempt to control themselves. As the nervousness, frustration or anger increases, one hand would move further up to hold the forearm or elbow. I have seen this gesture in the waiting room of hospitals and outpatients' clinic. It is also common amongst interviewees, students waiting to take an oral exam and sales representatives waiting at the reception desk of a company. As you will be standing in front of that person during the conversation, it is obvious that you will not notice whether they were holding their wrist, elbow or forearm. The point I want to make is that you should refrain from using this gesture as you would begin to feel angry or negative during the interaction.

## **Palm Gestures**

The palm-up gesture is used to show that you are not aggressive. You are open, honest and obedient. If you use the palm-up gesture when talking to someone, they will feel that you were being truthful with them. If you use this gesture when asking someone to do something for you, there is a great likelihood that they will willingly accommodate (Figure 32).

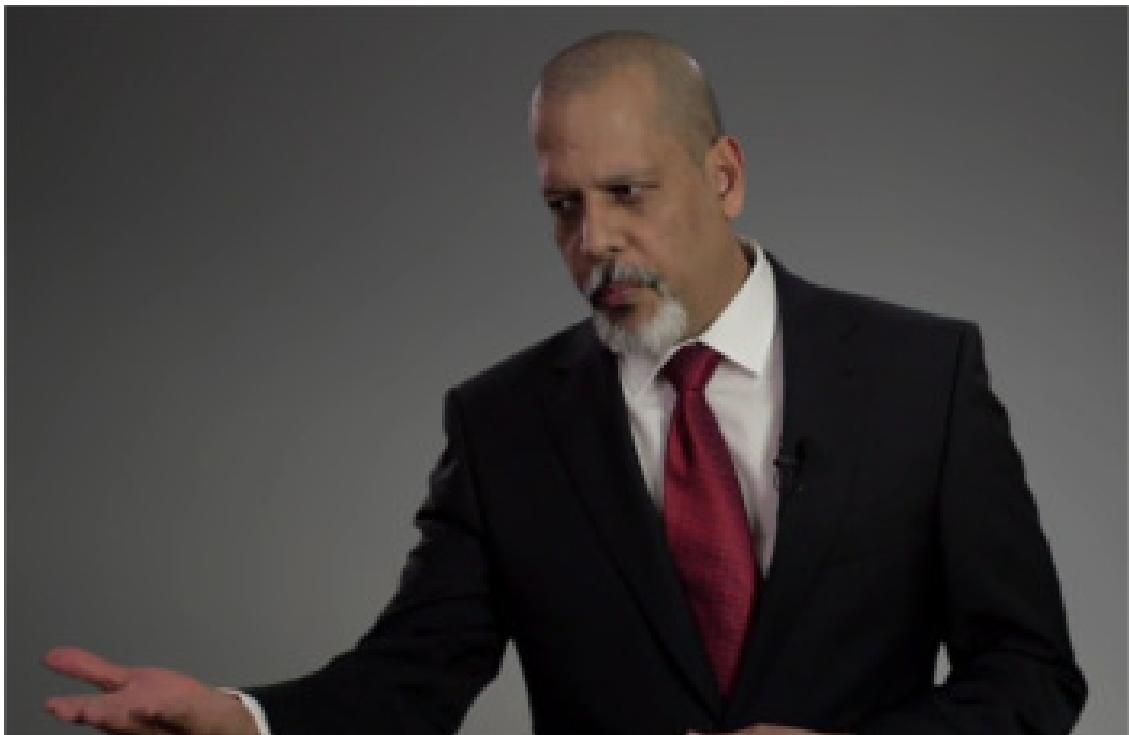


Fig. 32. The Palm Up Gesture

Imagine the person in figure 32 saying, “Could you please photocopy the agreement for me?” Note how the head lowers to show humbleness.

The palm-down gesture denotes power and authority. It is used to beat the other person into obedience and take control of the situation. If this gesture is used when asking your secretary or subordinate to do something, they will surely comply, but with distaste. Avoid using this gesture when communicating with others because it would spoil the good atmosphere (Figure 33).

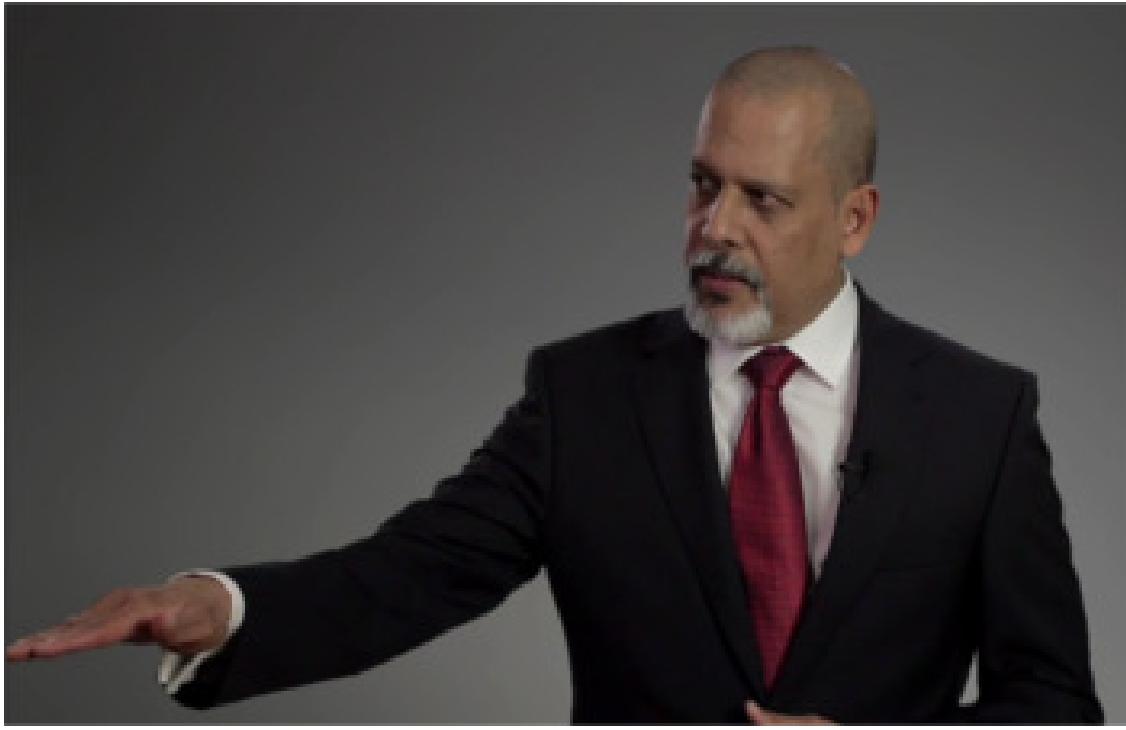


Fig. 33. The Palm Down Gesture

Imagine the person in figure 33 saying, “Photocopy the agreement for me and when you finish, put it there.”

The dominative and aggressive person may use the palm-down gesture, but to reinforce it, he will curl his fingers into a fist and use the index finger to point and give orders (Figure 34).

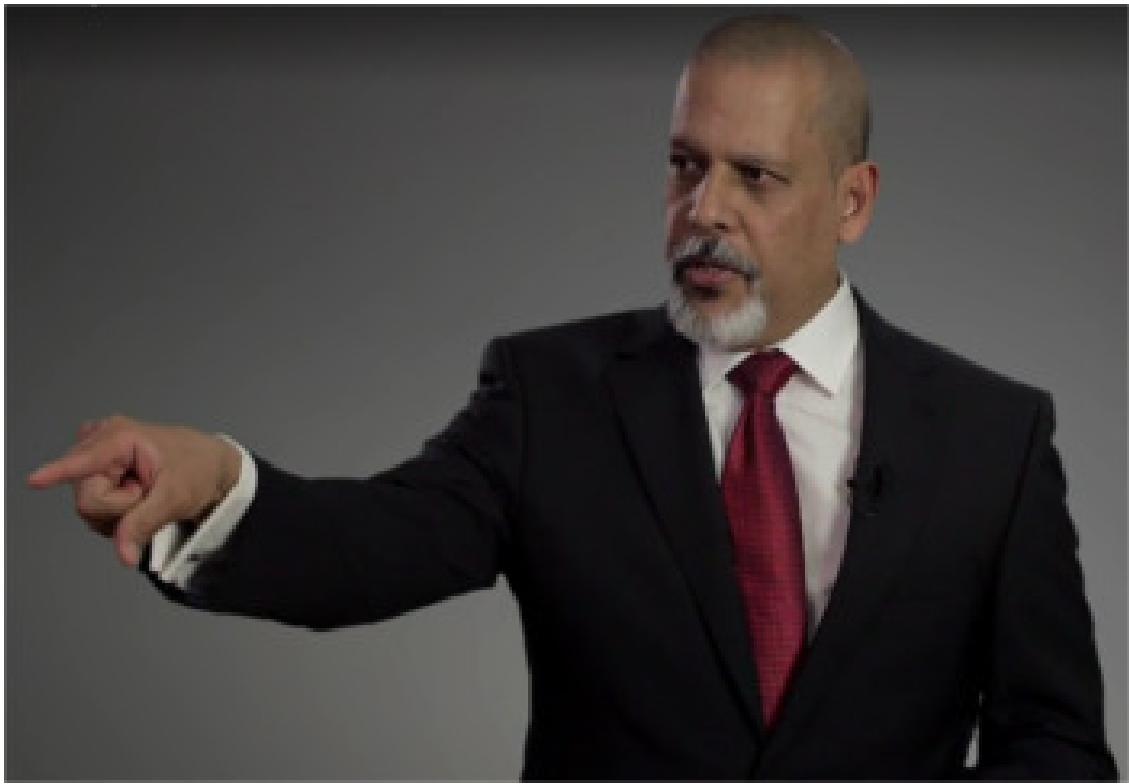


Fig. 34. The Index Finger Command

Imagine the person in figure 34 saying, “Photocopy the agreement and take it to HR, and when you come back make me some coffee.” Of course, his subordinate will have to comply because of the hierarchical advantage. However, a co-worker of the same professional status may rebel and feel the urge to use his middle finger to react to the dominative index finger. Communication is also the act of making people feel eager and compassionate when fulfilling your expectations. Wouldn’t it be better if someone did something for you or you did something for someone with pleasure?

Let me give you a life example of the negative impact of the dominating index finger. I was 25 years old and had just graduated from university. I was about to start my post graduate internship in Gynecology. I walked into the ward, entered the doctors’ room and introduced myself with pride. One of the doctors looked down at me, curled his fingers into a fist, and with his palm facing down, he used his index finger, pointed at me and

said, “Ok young man! We are going on a ward round. This is the kettle, there is the coffee. Make coffee for everyone.” And they all left the room.

Thirty minutes later, when they returned and realized that they were not greeted with the smell of freshly made coffee, he said angrily, “Why haven’t you prepared the coffee yet?” I looked at him calmly and said, “Don’t you know how to make coffee?” His jaw dropped and he lost his speech. During my internship, he never said a word to me. Had he been my boss, I would have had to comply, but unwillingly. He was not my boss, so I retaliated.

## 5. CULTURALLY REGULATED BODY LANGUAGE

### The OK Gesture

The OK gesture is the act of joining the thumb and index finger to form a circle or ring. The other fingers are held in an upright position in the air (Figure 35).

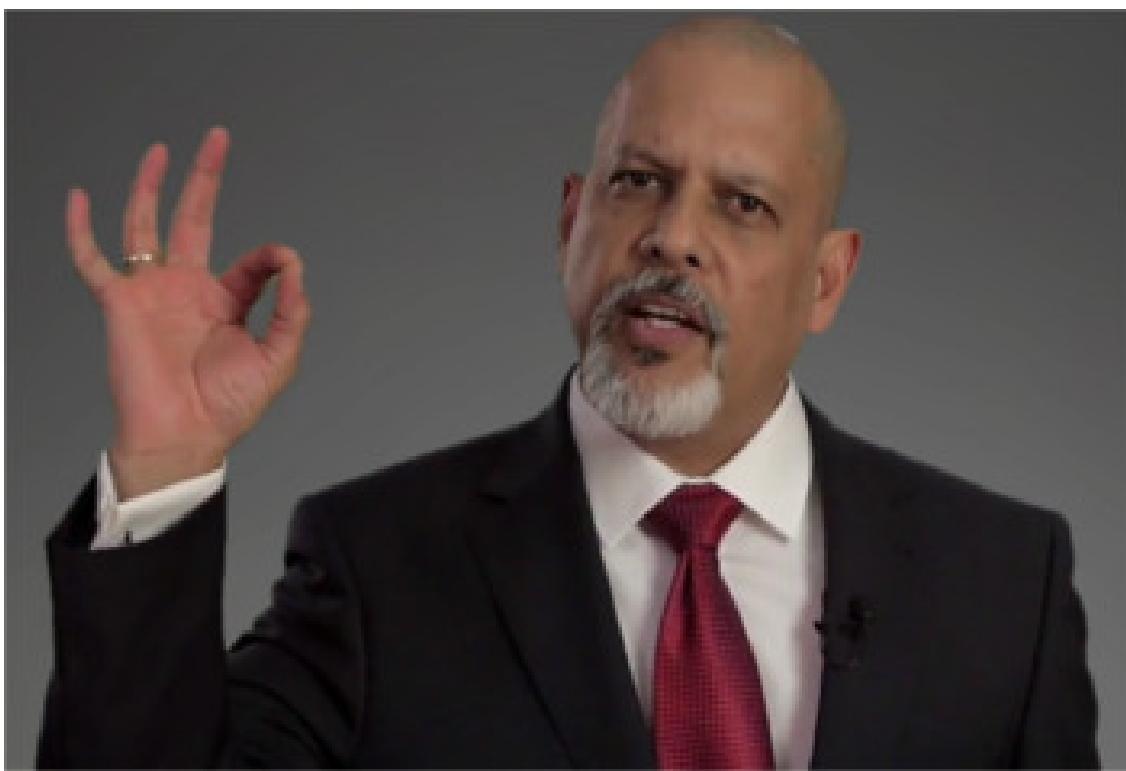


Fig. 35. The OK Gesture

The OK sign means okay in America and other English-speaking countries. Everyone will therefore understand its meaning and there will be no misunderstanding. However, it is important to remember that the OK gesture has different meanings in different countries and may create confusion. In France and Belgium, it means zero or nothing or worthless. So, can you imagine how confused a French person would feel if you used the ok gesture to show your satisfaction after a great meal? You were eager

to communicate your feelings and your gratitude. You wanted to show your appreciation for their culinary skills, but instead you destroyed the atmosphere.

In Japan, it means money because the fingers join to form a coin. If you used this gesture to show your satisfaction after a successful business meeting, your host might be surprised and confused. He might think that you were asking for a bribe. This could have a negative impact on the outcome of the interaction. In some Mediterranean countries the OK gesture is used to depict a private body orifice. A Greek might think that you were homosexual or you thought him to be homosexual. I don't even want to think of the consequences of such miscommunication.

In Brazil it is equivalent to the middle finger gesture, with which we are acquainted. So when you go to a bar or party in Brazil and you have enjoyed your drink, do not use this gesture to express your satisfaction. It would be advisable to use words to express yourself. The funny thing is that when you use this gesture when drinking, you will most likely have a huge smile on your face. Would this make the Brazilians realize that you mean no harm or would they link the smile to arrogance? I would prefer not to find out. Remember, if you are not sure about the weight of your gestures, then choose the safer way to communicate. Use words, simple words and they will understand.

## **The Thumbs Up Gesture**

The thumbs up gesture is commonly used to show approval and satisfaction (Figure 36).

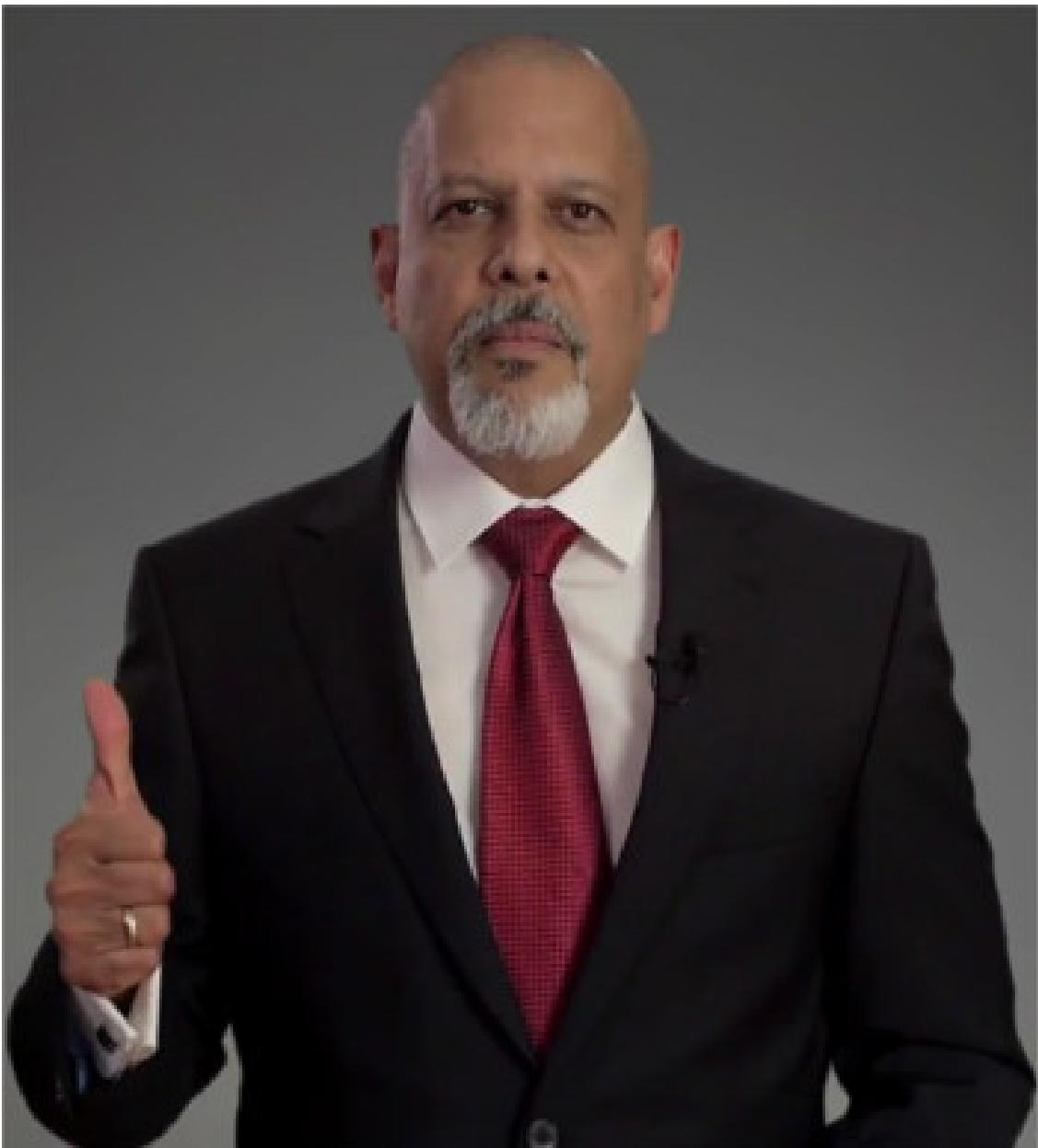


Fig. 36. The Thumbs Up Gesture

In North America and most parts of Europe, hitchhikers will use this signal to indicate that they need a lift. However, in certain parts of the Middle East or Greece it is highly offensive and it means to get stuffed. Can you imagine the consternation and anger a North American hitchhiker would create when hitching a ride in Greece? Sure, they will stop and give you a lift...They will lift you up and let you go and then leave their footprints on your face. What is the moral? We should not rely on people

in different parts of the World understanding our non-verbal gestures. These are the small things that need to be considered when communicating non-verbally. I guess that in this particular situation, it would be better to walk than to make a mistake.

## The V Sign

The V sign is used to represent victory. It became popular during the Second World War by Winston Churchill. The index and middle fingers are raised and parted. The remaining fingers are closed and the palm faces out (Figure 37).



Fig. 37. The V Sign

However, in Great Britain, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand the two-finger signal with the palm facing in is the obscene and disrespectful version of the V-sign. Its essence is to get stuffed and will most likely cause some misunderstanding. Fortunately, when we are celebrating

victory, our whole body will display our positive emotions. However, it would be better not to take the risk if you were alone or with a small group of friends in a foreign country.

## The Cuckold Gesture

The cuckold gesture is the act of raising the little finger and index finger to form the horns of the bull. The remaining fingers are clenched (Figure 38).

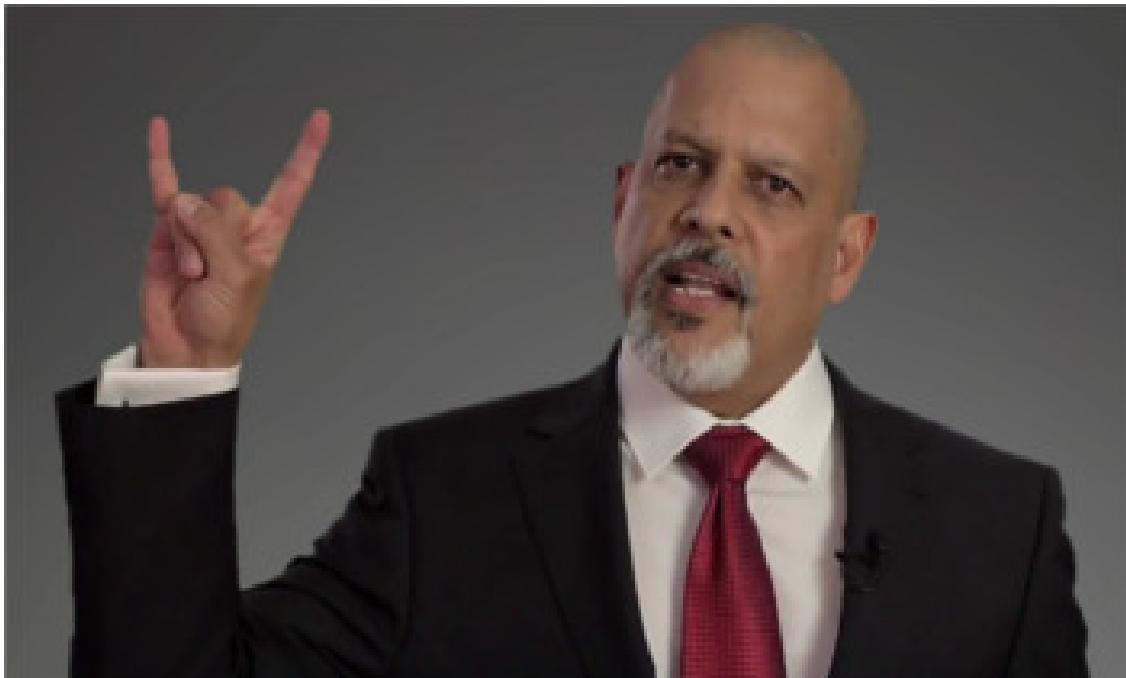


Fig. 38. The Cuckold Gesture

In America, this is a football gesture that is used to show the feeling of happiness and success. In Italy, it means that your wife is cheating on you. It is probably the most extreme way to insult an Italian man and may have dire consequences. So, if you are at a football match in Italy and your favorite footballer has scored a goal, do whatever you want with the other parts of your body, but keep your fingers to yourself.

## 6. THE TRUTH BEHIND THE LOWER BODY

### **Introduction**

The legs and feet are the most distal parts of the body in relation to the brain. This is why people are least aware of their leg gestures and almost unaware of the position and movements of their feet. So, if you want to gather information as to someone's true feelings and intentions, pay more attention to the legs and feet. If you could literally remove the huge desk away from someone, you would notice a variety of leg gestures. The seemingly calm and composed person may be repeatedly tapping or swinging their feet to reveal their frustration. The confident worker, boss or salesman may be maintaining eye contact, smiling and gesticulating with their open palms. However, their legs may be crossed or their ankles locked due to their insecurity. Some people may sit at the edge of their chair with the palms of the hands touching each other and residing between the legs (Figure 39).



Fig. 39. The Palm Touch

This gesture occurs when someone feels insecure and intimidated, especially in places like banks, city halls, insurance companies, tax offices and interview rooms. Effective communication is also related to reading people's intentions, so if it is possible, then by all means observe the lower body. Read and you will know whether or not your presence is appreciated by the other participants of the discussion. I sometimes allow my pen to fall on the floor just to see what is going on below the table.

## The Ankle Lock

The seemingly positive, relaxed and open person may have their ankles locked together under their chair (Figure 40). This allows them to control their negative emotions or defensive attitude or hide their nervousness or insecurity. If you understand the reason behind this gesture, you will be able to take measures to improve the communication atmosphere or at least you will know where you stand.



Fig. 40. The Ankle Lock

## **The Foot Lock**

When a shy woman locks the top of one foot around the other leg, you can be sure that she has retreated into her cocoon and will remain reserved and defensive unless you take measures to open the padlock and make her more receptive (Figure 41). You may have to lean forward, show your

palms and be more convincing or try another approach. If nothing seems to work, then it would be better to end the conversation and keep your pride. By backing away, you stand a chance of getting into another conversation.

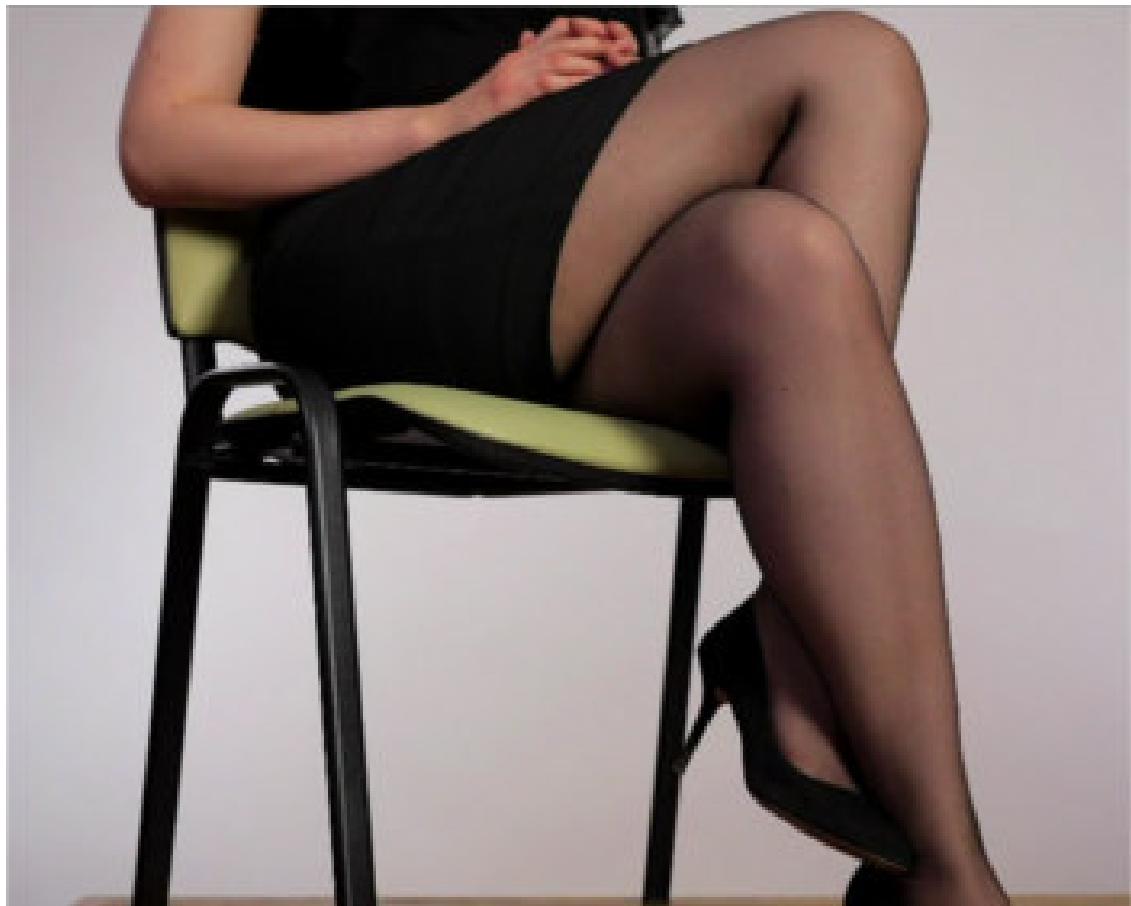


Fig. 41. The Foot Lock

## The Leg Cross

Crossing the legs, regardless of whether you are seated or standing, will serve to protect the genital region and shows that you are negative, insecure or defensive. However, we should be careful not to judge women who cross their legs when seated because it behooves them to do so and it makes them look like the perfect lady (Figure 42).



Fig. 42. The Seated Leg Cross

Of course, people who cross their legs when standing claim that it makes them feel warmer. The bottom line is that when you want to feel warm, the legs are pressed tightly against each other, as opposed to when you feel nervous, intimidated or defensive (Figure 43).



Fig. 43. The Standing Leg Cross

It is easier for me to accept when two women cross their legs during the conversation. However, if this happened when men were conversing, I would get the impression that there was no chemistry during the interaction. If there is no chemistry, there is no pleasure and the conversation eventually dies in agony.

## The Feet Dictates Direction

During an interaction with others, the position of the feet will reveal what is going on in the mind. Let's say you were talking to a woman who were looking at you and smiling. However, her body were not facing yours. Try to imagine the situation. She is looking at you. Her body is not facing yours. Her legs are crossed, with her feet pointing towards the door. What would it mean? It would mean that she had excluded you from the

conversation and both her body and feet were literally dragging her out of the room. Instead, she sat or stood there talking to you because she was trying to be patient and polite and did not want to hurt your feelings. You have two options. Capture her full attention and draw her back into the conversation or finish the conversation gracefully.

## The Figure Four Gesture

The figure four gesture is the act of placing the lower part of one leg to rest laterally on the thigh of the other leg to form the figure four (Figure 44).



Fig. 44. The Figure Four Gesture

It shows that the person has adopted a combative and competitive approach. At the same time it gives the perception that they are relaxed, but commanding. This position may be reinforced with one or both hands

holding the upper leg to create a padlock. The individual has now become bullheaded and it will be more difficult to open the padlock and bring them back into the receptive mood (Figure 45).



Fig. 45. The Figure Four Padlock

In Arab and Asian cultures, people take off their shoes before entering their homes or a mosque. This is because the soles of the shoes have been in many places and are therefore considered to be dirty. So, if you are one of the figure four users, please refrain from doing so in such cultures as you may be perceived as impolite and offensive. Remember, you will be judged by your attitude and behavior. So, instead of hoping that others will tolerate your lack of knowledge, just make sure you brush up on your cultural knowledge before travelling to another country. Today, most of us live and work in multi ethnic societies, so we might as well have this awareness to avoid disharmony.

## 7. AMOROUS GESTURES – DECODING FLIRTATIOUS GESTURES

### Introduction

In our contemporary world, people are afraid of being rejected. Rejection is a severe blow to one's self-esteem and therefore men will only make advances to a woman if success is certain. This is where the knowledge of flirtatious signals comes in handy. Both men and women unconsciously broadcast a package of non-verbal signals to communicate that they are intimately interested in another person. The body adopts an erect posture, with the backbone rigid. The chest or breast bulges out to greet the opposite sex. The stomach is pulled in and the process of breathing is temporarily terminated. The facial muscles are automatically activated and the eyes start to glitter.

The male will reach out to adjust his tie or cufflinks or straighten his jacket. He may also smooth down his hair. He will maintain eye contact for longer periods of time and the pupils will grow bigger and bigger as his excitement increases. His gaze will wander to different intimate geographical regions below the woman's neck to punctuate his interest. He will reach out more often to puff on his cigarette or sip his drink or simply place his thumbs under his belt with the remaining fingers directed towards the genital region.

Women will decode these signals instantaneously because of their power of intuition and perceptiveness. However, the majority of men are blind to women's body language and this usually leads to their downfall. In this chapter, I will try to mitigate the risk of this downfall by decrypting the meaning of female flirtatious gestures and signals. However, please remember not to jump to conclusions based on one non-verbal signal. Study the whole group of gestures before formulating your opinion.

## **The Hair Play**

A woman whose interest has been aroused will fling her hair back with a toss of her head. She may also stroke or twirl or pull her hair back. By doing so she exposes her face and neck and becomes more seductive. This is her way of non-verbally communicating that she is attracted to you. All you need to do is to follow up with a few of your own gestures and this will set the stage to the verbal exchange. You may also notice these signals after the conversation has been initiated. This would mean that you were both on the same wavelength.

## **The Lip killer**

When a woman opens her mouth slightly and licks her lips, it shows that she may be sexually aroused. The licking begins at the corner of the mouth and gradually moves over the upper lip to increase its wetness. The lip lick may be replaced by parted lips, which become more appealing through the usage of saliva or lipstick. This serves to reinforce the invitation and punctuate the woman's readiness. In this case, words do not matter or matter the least.

## **Leg Crossing**

A woman indicates her interest in the opposite sex by crossing one leg over the knee of the other leg, with the shoe pointing towards the target. The foot may be pushed in and out of the dangling shoe to enhance the effect. Sometimes, one leg may be crossed under the other leg, with the knee exposed and pointing to the person to whom she is attracted. If there were more than two people involved in the discussion, you would be able to notice whose presence was more desirable. Please do not get me wrong. Such knowledge would be useful in everyday situations and would save embarrassment. How many times have you spoken to more than one person and intuitively felt that you were intruding? If you could

consciously detect the accompanying body language, then you would be able to come to a conclusion and behave accordingly.

## 8. TYPES OF FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

### The Smile

We all know that when people are happy or content they have the tendency to smile more often. The mere fact that you think of something pleasant or recall a joyful event in your life will evoke a smile. This is a natural reaction of our brain and it is involuntary. This is the same when you interact with others. If you feel at ease during the conversation, satisfied with the flow of topics, and attracted to the people engaged, then you smile more often. And your smile will be more genuine.

The real smile envelopes your whole face, widens and separates your lips to reveal your teeth and lifts your cheeks. The real smile pushes warmth into your eyes. It straightens your posture, and rocks your whole body into motion. I know you all have this real smile reserved for special people, reserved for special circumstances and reserved for special achievements. So all you need to do is trigger it off during your social and business interactions and the way to proper communication will be paved. You become more genuine and your credibility increases.

You can go one step further and take prophylactic measures to ensure that the real smile will fall into place at the right time. Before your encounter, be it social or business, spend time preparing yourself for it. Think of all the positive things connected with this particular meeting, think of all the positive outcomes, think of the virtues of the people engaged in the interaction. Prepare yourself mentally for the event and a genuine smile will emerge on your face and flow into your eyes. Prepare yourself and smile with genuine warmth.

Let me bring to your attention one common mistake people make before mingling with others. They wonder and ponder and concoct so many proofs and arguments against their conversation party or against the venue or against the circumstances. They behave like lawyers preparing to

defend their clients. Once they are equipped with the right tools, they proceed to socialize and fail. This happens because a clear message had been sent to the brain. The message is, “I don't want to interact because I don't want to socialize with these people. I don't want to be in this place. I will feel uncomfortable in their presence. I will not know what to talk about.” The brain has gathered all these small pieces of information. When the time comes, it will react appropriately. It will send commands to your vocal chords and you end up saying the wrong things. Similarly, it sends commands to your limbs and facial muscles and you end up sending negative body signals to the recipients.

My philosophy is simple. If you have decided to participate in a social get-together or a formal meeting with business partners, then feed your brain with proper data and the outcome will be appreciated by everyone. Your brain is like a database. Feed it with wrong data and wrong data will be rendered in the user interface. The user interface is the way you stand, walk, talk and gesticulate. It is the confidence or lack of confidence that your body emits. It is the facial expression and the ability to attract or repel the audience. The point I want to make here is that if you fuel your brain with the right thoughts, then the brain will govern and manage your skeletal muscles accordingly. This will optimize your performance during the communication process.

Some people claim that they don't have time to go through the rigmarole of thinking about all of these positive things. The bottom line is that they unconsciously waste time sending wrong signals to the brain. So, utilize your time effectively by feeding the brain with valuable thoughts. Remember, the brain is obedient and will render the services you require, be it good service or bad service. Remember, seek and you will find. Seek good things and you will find good things. Seek problems and problems will appear.

## **The Tight-Lipped Smile**

The lips are stretched horizontally and the cheeks are lifted. However, the teeth remain concealed behind the tight lips (Figure 46).



Fig. 46. The Tight Lip

This is indeed a fake smile and may appear when greeting strangers or people with whom you feel uncomfortable. Remember, when we are indeed happy, we automatically display our teeth. If the lips are stretched tightly across the face, it would mean that the person is trying to hide their true emotions and feelings or suppressing their anger or irritation. If the lips are relaxed, then the person has lost interest and you have therefore been excluded from the conversation. Of course, we also need to remember that people who have bad teeth, rotten teeth or tooth decay may also try to hide them behind their lips. Nevertheless, knowledge of this smile will make you more aware during the interaction.

## The Forced Smile

This is the act of spreading the lips to reveal only the upper teeth. The

lower teeth remain hidden behind the bottom lip to keep the truth from leaping out. The eyes remain cold, dull and impersonal (Figure 47).



Fig. 47. The Forced Smile

The forced smile is often used as a smile of courtesy when you do not want to hurt someone's feelings. For example, someone you like and respect may have cracked a stale joke or made a pathetic remark. What do you usually do? You simply force a smile in order to be polite and maintain the flow of conversation. However, if someone was not aware of the forced smile, they would continue to blunder and it could have a negative impact on the meeting.

### **The Smug Smile**

The lips are usually pressed together or slightly parted and only one side

of the lips moves slightly upwards (Figure 48).



Fig. 48. The Smug Smile

It denotes smugness, conceitedness and dominance. However, it is also used to show that you are good natured and humorous and it allows you to gain people's attention. During the interaction, you would have to compare this smile with other gestures and decide whether it was appropriate to prolong or terminate the discussion.

## The Face Platter

This is the act of placing the chin in the palms or on the back of both hands. The elbows are placed on a table or on the legs just above the knees to provide additional support for the head. The lips may be closed and relaxed or slightly parted to expose the teeth. The eyes are warm and friendly and the pupils are bigger than usual (Figure 49).



Fig. 49. The Face Platter

This gesture is used by women to show men that they are fully focused and interested in the conversation. At the same time, they are presenting their faces for the men to admire and acknowledge. This would be the ideal moment to look at them straight in the eyes, open your arms, expose your palms and compliment them about their looks. However, before jumping to conclusions, we need to be careful and observe other non-verbal signals. If the eyelids or head started to droop, it would mean that boredom has crept in and you are becoming excluded from their list of admirers.

## 9. FACIAL EXPRESSIONS – EYE LANGUAGE

### Maintain Eye Contact

Years of research have brought psychologists to believe that the eyes can be used as a tool to increase the effectiveness of the communication. They are powerful weapons that can attract people when used properly or repel them when used in the wrong way. Many people believe that it's enough to maintain eye contact for at least 50% of the conversation. However, ask yourself how you would feel if your conversation party were not looking at you for 50% of the conversation. You would feel as a non-entity or you would become suspicious that they were not being sincere with you.

I personally maintain eye contact for over 80% of my interaction with others. I think that this is the reason why I am able to stimulate the feeling of respect, affection and trust. People feel at ease in my company and are willing to open up and confide in me. This is because my eyes tell them that I am an honest and empathetic person and I am interested in what they are saying. I am intimately connected with them. However, maintaining eye contact does not mean gluing your eyes to the eyes of the other participants. We don't want to make them uncomfortable or feel threatened and intimidated during the interaction because this will make them retreat into their shells.

Look into their eyes, but not all the time. The rule is to direct your gaze towards the region below and around the eyes. However, you should allow your eyes to wander to the nose, mouth, cheeks and chin, but do not migrate further down as this is reserved for more intimate situations. People may jump to wrong conclusions when your eyes stray away from their faces only to land and reside on their chest, breasts or pelvic region. Wouldn't you? Of course, if your intention is to seduce, then go ahead and do as you wish. The art of seduction is far beyond the scope of this book. Anyway, let's get back to the eyes. I need to punctuate that when you maintain eye contact, you come across as a strong, confident, wise and

intelligent person. The magnetic force that you now possess will serve to enthrall the inhabitants of the corporate jungle. The power that you now possess will allow you to captivate the members of the social forest. And communication in such circumstances can only be successful.

When you avert your eyes a bit too often, you are sending the subliminal message that you are insecure, indifferent, insincere and duplicitous. Believe me, this will be easily and quickly picked up by those with whom you are mingling. This is the bad and negative energy hanging precariously in the atmosphere, waiting to destroy the communication protocol. Remember, if there is no FTP, file transfer protocol, then there is no transfer of files. There is no transfer of data and sorry, there is no transfer of positive energy between those who are interacting, and the conversation dies in agony. So take a step forward and start practicing to use your eyes as a tool for communication.

Practice on safe grounds. Practice in the presence of your family and friends, with whom you feel comfortable. Make it your duty to capture their eyes as often as you can. Once you have mastered eye contact on known territories, you can plunge into the unknown and see how it works with corporate colleagues, business partners and strangers. After all, the eyes are just two beads embedded in separate sockets. So why should you feel awkward when looking into them. I do hope that this chapter has so far been an eye-opener for you.

## **The Honest Pupils**

The eyes are considered to be the central point of the human body that will expose your true feelings. The pupils dilate or contract in order to regulate the amount of light entering the eyes. The size of the pupils will also change involuntarily, depending on your attitude and emotions. For example, when someone is excited, the size of the pupils will increase. If a woman is intimately interested in a man, the pupils will dilate significantly. Some men will decrypt this signal correctly and take the appropriate measures. When people are angry or disinterested, the pupils will contract and become beady. Remember, when you are communicating

with others, look at the pupils and you will gather information about their true feelings. The amount of eye contact is also important.

## **Eye Contact Triangle**

As you already know, when someone maintains eye contact during the conversation, it shows that they are confident, honest, and trustworthy, and that they are interested in what you are saying. This will surely allow you to feel at ease in their company and will pave the way to a fruitful relationship. During a social encounter, people will look at the triangular region between the eyes and the lips. If the eyes stray away from the face to focus on the chest, breasts or pelvic region, it would show the intention to seduce. During a business level discussion, the gaze is usually directed at the triangular region between the eyes and the forehead. This shows the intention to create a serious atmosphere. It is also the gaze that is used by a boss when reprimanding a subordinate.

## **The Eye Blink Reflex**

Blinking is a natural movement of the eye lids and the average frequency is about 6-10 times per minute. People will blink more rapidly when they are lying or feeling stressed or uncomfortable. However, it is worth remembering that someone may blink more often when they are attracted to you. In this case, the hyperactive eyelids will be accompanied by other signals. A woman may twirl or flip her hair or simply touch her hair. The more often this happens, the more interested they are in you.

## **Eyeball Movements Reveal Deceitfulness**

The eyeballs will involuntarily move in different directions during the conversation. When a right-handed person is trying to envision something from a past experience, the eye balls will automatically move up and to the left. This is because they are calling on the visual memory for an answer. However, when that person is lying and trying to concoct or create

a picture in their mind, the eyeballs will move up and to the right. These movements may be the opposite for a left-handed person. Based on this knowledge, you may now claim that it is difficult to determine whether or not someone were lying because you may not know if they were right-handed or left-handed. I agree. Well, one simple way to find out would be to ask different kinds of questions and observe the movements of the eyeballs.

Try this experiment by asking someone the following questions:

- What route do you take when driving to work?
- Which one of your co-workers is the most well-dressed?

In order to answer these questions, they need to call on their visual memory for remembered pictures. A right-handed person will look up and to the left, whereas a left-handed person will look up and to the right. Now ask the following questions that require visual construction:

- How would your boss look if he were two times shorter, taller, fatter or slimmer and only wearing his underwear?
- What would you do if you were publicly humiliated by your boss?

In order to answer these types of questions, they would have to create a picture in their mind. Observe the movement of the eyes because the same movement will be replicated when concocting a lie. Remember, people will construct new pictures when lying or being economical with the truth.

Some people may also look down when lying in order to concentrate on the false information they are about to convey or because they do not want to face your non-verbal signals of negativity or repulsion. They generally give the impression that they were asking for forgiveness. This takes place very often in the case of children.

## **Control Their Eyes**

Research has shown that over 80 % of the message that is reaching the brain comes through the eyes. This means that if your interlocutor were looking at you when listening, they would surely understand the message

you were conveying. So, if you want to convince them, you need to control their gaze. Use a pen as a pointer when you want someone to look at the content of a document. When you want them to stop reading and look at you, move your pointer away from the document towards your face. Now you can continue speaking. They will understand you because they are now focusing on you. If someone were not looking at you when you were talking, it would not make sense to continue because the message would not reach them. Back in the old days I would use a simple technique to capture my students' attention. I was 19 years old and teaching some rebellious teenagers who were more interested in the opposite sex than learning. Whenever their gaze wandered elsewhere, I stopped talking and remained silent. I sometimes kept my hand frozen in mid-air. The silence rotated their heads and eyes back to me. On other occasions, I raised my tone of voice or clapped my hands to draw their attention.

## 10. HEAD GESTURES

### **Nodding**

Nodding is a gesture that is used to demonstrate affirmation, agreement or understanding. It is also a sign of recognition or acknowledgement of another person's presence. It is common in almost all cultures across the globe, with the exception of countries like Bulgaria, Greece and Albania. A slow and lengthened nod shows that your interlocutor is analyzing your message and is in full agreement with you. They are interested in what you have to say and will give you time to express yourself. If it is accompanied with a warm smile, it shows that rapport has been created. Remember, when you nod, you actually encourage people to open up. And this allows you to control the flow of conversation. A series of fast and short nods show that the listener has understood your point, but is becoming impatient and would like you to move on to another point. The faster the movements of the head, the more impatient the listener has become. In addition, they may also subconsciously touch their ear or cover the earhole to non-verbally accentuate their feelings. It would be advisable to move on to another point or allow the recipient to speak.

### **Head Shaking**

Shaking the head is used to demonstrate disagreement or disapproval. It is common in almost all parts of the world, with the exception of countries like Bulgaria, Greece and Albania. If the movement of the head is fast and rhythmic, it implies an emphatic negation. A slow head shake may denote that the listener is in disagreement, but is still analyzing and trying to decode the message. It may also mean that the audience is captivated and extremely impressed by what they see or hear and they find it difficult to believe. This gesture occurs very often when sportspeople achieve the

impossible.

## **Head Angle**

It is of great importance to observe the angle of the head during the interaction. If there is harmony, mutual understanding and acceptance during an interaction, the bodies and heads of the participants will be facing each other. When someone has lost interest in you, the brain will send signals to the body to literally drag the body away. The body starts to move away from you and the feet will point towards the place of interest. This shows that you have been excluded from the conversation. Well, at first, the head may still be directed towards you, but once it starts to turn away from you, you can be certain that you have been neglected. It is the final call for you to terminate the conversation and seek refuge elsewhere, in another part of the room with more receptive and hospitable people. At least it will allow you to keep your dignity.

## **The Head Never Lies**

When we are truly in agreement with someone, the nodding gesture will be in congruence with the message and the tone of voice. For example, you may say, "Adam, I fully agree with you. I like your ideas and you can count on my help." In this case, the nod will be compatible with the verbal message. Conversely, if we are truly in disagreement with someone, the shaking of the head will be in alignment with the words we use and the tonality. For example, "Adam, I am inclined to disagree with you and will therefore not join you in your new endeavor." In this case, the head shake will be compatible with the negative message. The arm fold gesture may join in to supplement the head gestures. Unfortunately, in real life situations it happens in a totally different way.

Lying has become a way of life for us human beings for many reasons. We may not want to hurt someone's feelings due to the relationship or due to respect for that person. It therefore behooves us to be polite. For example, someone may say to you, "I fully agree with you. I like your ideas and you can count on my help." However, you may notice the contradiction between the verbal and non-verbal signals. The interlocutor is consciously saying yes, but the brain is moving the head from side to side to expose their true intentions. In addition, their arms may also automatically cross over the chest or may be hidden behind the back to show negation. The eyes will be averted while telling the lie. Understanding how the head works may come in handy in multiple situations in life. Let me give you a few examples when the uncontrollable head movements betrayed its owner and allowed me to make the right decision.

I clearly remember a past situation when I was negotiating my fee for self-improvement training in a multinational corporation. After one hour of negotiating, the HR director looked at me, smiled and said, "We need your help, but I am not sure if we can pay you that amount of money." The brain was forcing his head to move up and down. By doing so, it was telling me that the director would be ready to sign the contract, but he was bluffing to get a better deal. I trusted my power of perception and told him that I was unable to reduce my price. Five minutes later, the contract was secured.

Let me give you another example. Many years ago, I had been trying to sell my apartment and had planned to do so without the help of the agency. The potential buyer inspected the whole apartment scrupulously. His face was impassive. However, his body was broadcasting positive signals. He was rubbing his palms together slowly and there was a flicker of excitement in his eyes. When he saw the terrace, a quick smile flew across his face before it became impassive once again. The rubbing of the palms continued. At one point, he looked at me, nodded and said, "I cannot afford to pay you that amount of money for your apartment." That was all I needed.

I guided him back to the terrace, his hot button and continued the conversation. Ten minutes later, we shook hands and made arrangements to meet at the notary office to close the deal. You see, he yearned to buy

the apartment because he was getting good value for his money. However, it is natural for people to make a lower offer on properties. The only problem was that his brain was giving him away by shoving the head up and down, up and down and by forcing the palms into the rub.

Here is one last example of how the body can betray its owner. One day, I was dining with an acquaintance in an exclusive restaurant. At the end of the meal, I reached for my wallet to handle the financial aspect of that meeting. My dining partner looked at me and said, "Take it easy, Roy. I will cover the cost." I followed the instructions of his head and hands and paid for the meal. What is the message? Do not get too excited and proud when someone, for example, your boss shakes his head and says, "Bill, you have been great company. I have enjoyed talking to you." Observe and you will be able to act accordingly.

## 11. PERSONAL TERRITORY

### The Security Zone

Every human being has their own personal territory that is distinctly defined by an invisible boundary. This is the space or zone around the body to which they claim ownership. They feel calm, comfortable and secure within this zone. The amount of space they reserve for themselves will differ depending on the people with whom they are interacting and the circumstances.

The margin for lovers, partners and spouses will be from zero to around 6 inches. For children, relatives and close friends it will expand from 6 to about 18 inches. At a social get together and office gatherings, the acceptable distance varies from over 18 inches to over 40 inches, depending on the place of residence. Europeans will have a smaller personal zone as opposed to Australians, whereas Asians will need less personal space in relation to the Americans. People living in heavily populated places will require a smaller amount of personal space, as opposed to those residing in sparsely populated areas.

What happens when an unwanted person destroys the invisible line and moves into your personal space? Your heart starts to beat faster and your blood pressure rises because you feel as if you were being attacked. You become angry, irritated, your concentration drops and you begin to feel less secure. Your brain reacts by sending signals to your legs forcing them to retreat and that is why you find yourself automatically taking that step back from your opponent or intruder. Sometimes the reaction is more subtle and we move only the upper part of our body away from the trespasser. Unfortunately, every time you lean back or take a step back, the trespasser will lean forward or take a step forward.

The logic behind this is simple. You retreat to regain your territory, but at the same time your intruder will make advances towards you to regain

their territory. The person who retreats needs a bigger personal space than the person who advances. This results in a comical dance in which the trespasser dictates the movements. Such physical reactions will for sure have a negative impact on the communication. The person retreating will feel uncomfortable, intimidated or sexually harassed by the trespasser. On the other hand, the person trying to shorten the distance would feel that you were cold, impersonal, indifferent or unsociable.

In order to rectify this natural, but inappropriate reaction, we first need to understand and accept one natural phenomenon. Our behavior is similar to that of animals and we will fight to protect our personal territory. The only difference is that we do not go to the extremes of urinating, defecating or brutally attacking others to demonstrate our ownership. I mean, if we urinate or defecate, it would surely work. However, mankind is too refined to resort to such measures. We prefer to resolve the difficult situation by getting engaged in a mental battle with our invaders. The winner of this battle is granted a special prize, which is the redemption of their personal space. Once you are back in your personal space, you begin to feel at ease during the conversation and your self-confidence increases. When you feel confident, you are most likely to get what you came for. You achieve your goal.

## **Security Zone Management**

I have developed a special way to deal with the zone invasion and make sure that others feel comfortable in my presence. I quickly measure their private zone or personal space when we shake hands. When our hands embrace, I measure how far their hand is from their body. The further it is, the bigger their personal space. This means that I should be careful not to rupture their invisible line as this would make them feel uncomfortable. The outcome of the conversation would be disadvantageous. Conversely, the closer the wrist to the body, the smaller the personal space. In this case, I have to prepare myself mentally to remain motionless when they rupture my invisible line. Any movement back will have a negative effect on the outcome of the interaction.

Let me give you an example when someone shattered my territorial boundary and over-populated my personal space. I had been working as a personal advisor of the owner and CEO of a small prospering business enterprise. One day the sales manager, a woman, intercepted me on the corridor, as she needed my service as a coach. She was tall, taller than me, good looking and immaculately dressed. She had a huge smile on her face and both her upper and lower teeth were fully exposed. When she reached out to shake my hand, she was within 8 inches from me and almost breathing down my neck. Now, my private zone is about 16 inches, so you can tell what volcanic eruptions were taking place within my poor body.

My heart was pounding so loudly that I was afraid she would hear it. My blood vessels were pulsating. My brain was appealing to my legs to take that significant step back. Actually, one step would not have been enough in that situation. Instead, I stood there. I remained immobile. I met her eyes with mine and drew myself into the conversation. I became her coach and trained her for the next six months. If I had taken that frantic step back, she would have felt that I was cold, offensive and lacking personality. The outcome of that 10-minute exchange would have been disastrous.

The lesson to be learnt is that invasion of your private zone does not necessarily have to be connected with sexual availability and desire. Conversely, keeping someone at arm's length does not necessarily mean that you are cold and impersonal. If you understand the rules, you will be able to control your body. You now have knowledge of how the brain works. Use your knowledge and control your body. If you control your body, you control the event.

## 12. YOUR BODY POSITION

### **Ownership Gestures**

People have the tendency to spread or position different parts of their body on other objects. These objects could be their office chair, desk or whatever objects they desire to control. This allows them to claim ownership of the objects, as well as the space between their body and the objects, and feel good. They may place their jacket or bag on a chair in the boardroom to claim ownership and hence reserve the seat. The next time you walk into someone's house or office, do not make the mistake of sitting on their chairs. This would lead to animosity and will have a negative impact on the outcome of the meeting. I once tried this on one of my student just for the sake of supporting the theory. So, let me relate the story to you.

As the sales director, my student had his own office, with a posh chair and desk. When I arrived at the company that day, he was standing on the corridor and engaged in a conversation with the president. We had known each other very well, so after the cordial greetings, he asked me to proceed to his office and promised to join me within a few minutes. I entered his office, but instead of taking my usual place, I went around the desk and occupied his chair. A few minutes later, he walked into the room, looked at me and stopped in mid-stride. His right arm moved across to grab hold of his left arm. His smile disappeared for a split second and his lips pressed against each other. After the experiment, he admitted that when he saw me in his chair, he felt intimidated and lost his composure. That day we decided to ignore the agenda and concentrate on the essence of ownership gestures.

There is one place where establishing ownership gestures becomes evident. You are on the plane and have acquainted yourself with your window seat or aisle seat. The middle seat passenger approaches, greets you politely, plants his body into his seat, spreads his shoulder to capture

as much personal space as possible and then places his arms on both armrests. This is when the armrest battle begins and it may continue throughout the flight, as each passenger will try to manage their personal space effectively. Once they claim their personal space, they feel comfortable and it becomes easier for them to communicate effectively.

## **Replicating Behavior**

What do you notice when you observe people who are on the same wavelength? If there is chemistry during the interaction, they will adopt the same postures and use the same gestures. The pace at which they communicate and the tone of their voice will also be identical. This is simply because we human beings have the natural tendency to mimic those with whom we are in agreement. In other words, we replicate people's behavior if we share the same opinion or feelings on the topic being discussed. If they fold or unfold their arms or legs, we will follow. If they use their arms to be more descriptive, we will do likewise. Whenever, they raise or lower their voice, we will follow diligently. If they speak slowly or fast, we will also accommodate. Every time they take a sip of coffee or whatever they are drinking, we'll do the same.

If we like and feel comfortable in their company, we will emulate their body movements with great precision. Therefore, if you want to establish rapport during the conversation, you need to use this knowledge to your advantage and adopt the right behavior. You need to move as they do, you need to talk as they do. You need to gesticulate in accordance with them. Match their tone of voice. In general, your body needs to be in unison with their body. However, use your judgement and try not to be too conspicuous. You do not want them to believe you were mocking them. If your interlocutor were breathing heavily due to health problems or exhaustion, you do not have to hyperventilate yourself. Just increase your tempo of speaking to accommodate. Gesticulate a bit more energetically and inject more energy in your voice. If someone is phlegmatically slow, you do not necessarily have to fully restrict your body movements. Just be less dynamic when gesticulating and decrease the tempo at which you are

talking. Observe others during the conversation, detect whether or not rapport has been created and take the right steps to improve the situation. Remember one thing, you like them if they behave like you and vice versa.

Use this knowledge in your next encounter and you will capture people's heart and win their friendship. Stand and move like them. Mirror their behavior and rapport will be established. However, if your boss sits back in his chair, clasps his hands behind his head and assumes the figure four position when you were discussing your promotion, do not emulate his behavior. It would offend him and he would begin to despise you without even understanding the reason for that. He would most likely seek and find multiple reasons for not promoting you. Sooner or later, it would probably lead to your demotion or total downfall. If your boss rubs his chin or beard when contemplating on your pay rise, do not emulate his behavior. Do not fill your mouth with objects when he does so. Simply wait and observe the non-verbal signals that follow and then take relevant measures. Use your judgement and copy people's body language in the appropriate situations.

## The Communication Angle

Let's focus on two people who are fully and truly engaged in a pleasant conversation. They are maintaining eye contact almost throughout the whole exchange. They are smiling warmly and using the same postures, gestures and tone of voice. Most importantly, their heads, upper body and feet are turned towards each other. This proves that they acknowledge and enjoy each other's presence and that each of them is deriving utmost pleasure from the interaction. Now, let's stop for a while and analyze the facial expression.

Our facial expression is a good indicator of whether we are interested or disinterested in the conversation or the participants of the conversation. It is the KPI, the key performance indicator of the conversation. However, we need to remember one thing. Some people are experts at masking their true intentions and feelings. This may mislead us to believe that we are in alignment or in tune or dancing to the same music. If you find it important to unveil their real thoughts, then concentrate on their body angle. It is the

angle of the body that explicitly reveals what is going on in the brain. It reveals their interest or the air of indifference in the conversation and their expectations of prolonging or terminating the interaction. It is the genuine posture that is managed by the brain.

For example, if your body is not mirroring the other body, it means that you would prefer to terminate the conversation and be elsewhere. In other words your body is literally drawing you away from your interlocutor. Even though you may still be looking at that person, your legs may be pointing elsewhere. Your body may be turned to someone else. Your body will usually say what you will not verbalize, because you are not assertive enough (Figure 50).

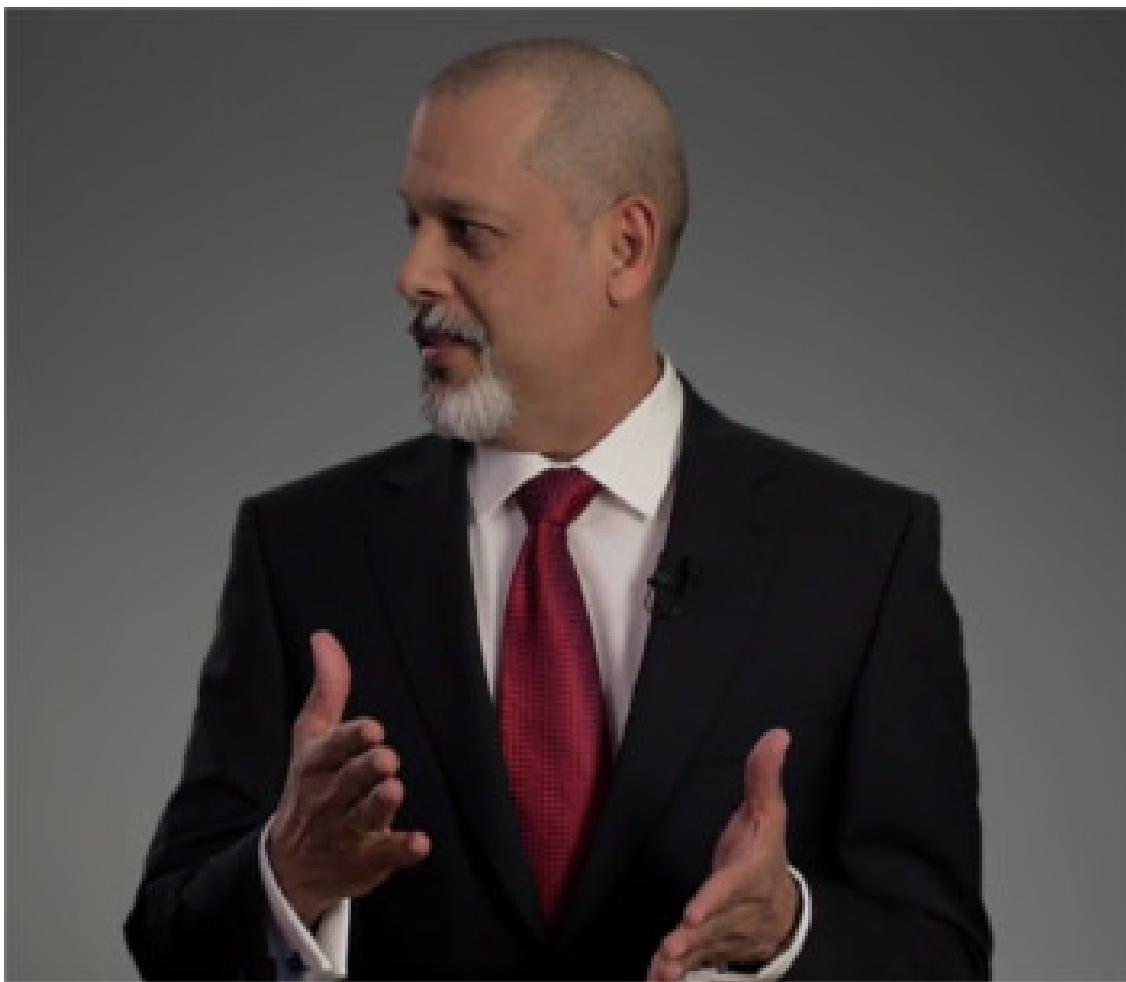


Fig. 50. The Body Turn

If a third party is involved in the conversation and there is mutual interest and pleasure, then all three bodies will cooperate to form an equilateral triangle. Distortion of this triangle will show who has more affinity to who during the talk. Once you continuously and subconsciously sway your body away from one person towards another person, it shows with whom you want to engage. So, make sure that you maintain the correct angle so as not to exclude anyone. This will result in embarrassment and unnecessary ill feelings.

It is essential to remember that the more people taking part in the conversation, the more challenging it becomes to give each person equal attention. So when talking, be sure to navigate your whole body to equally focus your attention on each participant. If you move only your head towards someone and keep your body stable, it shows that you have already discarded that person from the conversation. Remember, the body takes precedence over the head and will indicate your target.

## **The X Position**

During your interaction with others, please refrain from crossing your arms or legs as it projects negativity, insecurity or malcontent. My students keep telling me that they feel comfortable when folding their arms. They feel at home. Fine, no problem. Go ahead and cross your arms and legs when you are at home, in the seclusion of your home. I also do so when I am relaxing and watching a film because it makes me feel good. However, when you are interacting with people, you cannot allow yourself to behave like this because you will create a bad impression.

When you feel insecure, when you are afraid, when you feel negative and you are in disagreement with someone, your brain will jump into action. It will send signals to your arms. You then cross your arms to protect your heart. You clasp your hands in front of your pelvic region to protect your masculinity or femininity. You may even cross your legs and end up losing your balance. This is how the brain works and observers will subconsciously feel you were insecure, critical or negative and this may turn them off. So, regardless of how you feel, open up. Open your arms to

show your palms. By exposing your heart, you show that you are not afraid and that you are willing to interact with them. Even if you disagree, open your arms. Let them know that you understand their point of view and draw them into the discussion. Remember, understanding does not mean that you accept their opinion.

If someone were crossing their arms when you were speaking, then it would be appropriate to open them up and make them more receptive. Lean forward, open your arms, expose your palms and tell them that you see that they have a question. Ask them if they needed more clarification on a point. Remember, their body will speak before they verbalize their intentions. Jump in and bring them back into the game before it's too late.

## **The Seating Configuration**

As trivial as it may seem, the sitting configuration may have a significant impact on the results of your interaction. This is why I would like to analyze this in relation to business encounters. I will therefore concentrate on two basic, but strategically important configurations; The Side by Side Configuration, and The Corner to Corner Configuration. The Side by Side Configuration is known as the position which portrays mutual cooperation and agreement (Figure 51). You can maintain eye contact and gesticulate freely. You create an atmosphere of trustworthiness. This configuration signifies the willingness to work together to reach a win-win situation. It is considered to be a very good seating configuration. However, it is important to be aware that we may inadvertently intrude upon someone's personal space.

I vividly remember a female sales director of a multinational corporation who always adopted the side by side position during my coaching sessions with her. She understood the gravity of choosing the right position because she had great business acumen. Unfortunately, by doing so she invaded my personal zone. Of course, I did not have a problem with accepting this approach because I understood the meaning underlying people's behavior. However, had I been the normal, everyday business partner, it might have

had its repercussions. After I had finished my 2-year coaching sessions, she became more convinced to using the Corner to Corner position.

The corner to corner position with both bodies turned towards each other, is my favorite desk sitting position (Figure 51). I consider it to be the least invasive, but most effective position to adopt during both the business and social encounter. This position allows us to be close, but again, not too close to each other. It fosters trust and friendliness and allows us to maintain as much eye contact as necessary. At the same time it gives us the freedom to gesticulate without exposing the whole body. We create rapport but still allow our conversation partner to retreat into their own private zone when it becomes necessary. The corner of the desk or table serves as the invisible barrier, which makes everyone feel secure and at the same time open and expansive.

I consider this to be the best sitting configuration for all kinds of interaction. During the past 20 years I have never been disappointed. The feedback provided by my students have served to strengthen my conviction. When I say students, I mean managers and directors, who have been successful in improving their relationship with their business partners. This particular seating configuration allows everyone to feel secure and pleased at the same time. What else can you ask for when cooperating with others in the business world?

## SEATING CONFIGURATION



Fig. 51. The Seating Configuration

## SECTION 2

# **VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

# 13. LET YOUR EARS REPRESENT YOU

## Word Cognizance

During the first 30 seconds of your encounter with someone, you are able to detect what they would like to talk about. In the majority of cases, they jump straight into their topic, right after the first few words of introduction. They are actually pulling you into their conversation world. The flow of conversation becomes simple, because all you need to do is to give them the chance to express themselves freely. Listen attentively and show your interest by asking questions pertaining to the topic. By asking questions you keep them in the trance of talking until you are ready to let go.

However, I'm sure that you have all found yourselves in situations when the conversation was dying before it even gained life. This is because you failed to notice the inner needs of the other person. You failed to notice what they would enjoy talking about.

So how can you rectify this mistake during your next encounter? Be word cognizant. Listen carefully to the words they are using and you will be provided with information of the desired topics. This is because people subconsciously transmit signals to their listeners. All you need to do is pick up these signals and react. For example, if you were planning to buy a new car, it is obvious that you would be obsessed with this thought. If your dream car is for example Audi A8, you will begin to notice all the different models of this car on the streets. The next time you get involved in a conversation, you will surely want to talk about cars, Audi A8 in particular. How would you feel if you were ignored or if you were disrupted because the other person preferred to talk about something else? You would feel angry, disappointed, rejected. On the other hand, how would you feel if they were cognizant enough to detect the clue you were

providing and tried to accommodate by getting engaged in the discussion about cars? You would be grateful, happy and fulfilled.

So what is the moral? Listen and you will pick up the clues your conversation party is sending. Hang on to that clue until you receive another clue. Unfortunately, if you want to keep people interested in the conversation, you need to talk about them. It is sad because you might not get the chance to fulfil your needs to express yourself. We just need to live with this. Someone will always dominate the conversation and the dominator will be the one to talk about themselves and their affairs. I like what Dale Carnegie said: “Talk to someone about themselves and they'll listen for hours.”

## **Ear Contact**

Just as you use your eyes to show your engagement in the conversation, you should use your ears. Every human being feels better, more confident and elated when talking about something they understand. It gives them great pleasure to do so. Some people prefer to talk about sports, because it is related to their interests, and if it's related to their interests, it means they possess knowledge in this field.

Some people may prefer to talk about politics or their jobs or their families, for exactly the same reason. So it all boils down to one fundamental thing. Everyone likes talking about themselves and they would be grateful if they found somebody to listen to them. So, this is exactly what we need to bear in mind when indulging in conversations.

Listen attentively to the content of their speech and ask as many questions as possible pertaining to the topic. By asking the right questions and conforming your understanding with a nod, you show them that you're interested in what they are saying and that you have been following them diligently.

If your colleague at work or your business partner, or even your neighbor, is telling you about their children's achievements, listen and ask questions, instead of interrupting to talk about your children's achievements. This

will make them feel frustrated because they are trying to get something out of their system, something interesting, something that makes them feel happy. And you are not allowing them to do so. They want to talk about their children's achievements and you are restricting them. Please do not do so because you are destroying the communication protocol.

Your colleague, who has just returned from an exotic vacation in Thailand, is bubbling over with excitement when reminiscing the great time he had experienced. Do not interrupt to tell him about your vacation in Australia. Allow him to be expansive, allow him to relive the great moments once again. He is replicating the past situation and actually replicating his happiness at the same time. Do not destroy his feeling of happiness and pleasure by opening your mouth instead of your ears.

Of course, when you do open your mouth, do so to ask relevant questions and not to brag about your achievements. And one more thing. Do not listen for the sake of listening, as it does not have the required impact. When you listen to someone, make it your duty to register important information in the recesses of your mind. This may become useful during your future encounters.

## **Ear Contact - Life Example**

During the years of conducting self-improvement training in various corporations, I had the opportunity to tutor an eclectic mix of executives. They all had one thing in common. They were all proud, content and profoundly moved when they realized how much I had remembered when they had expanded on their life story, both personal and professional. Not only did I remember the problems we had discussed, but I also remembered specific details. I remembered names, people, places and important incidents related to their lives.

One day, after a short recollection of past incidents, the owner and CEO of the company asked me how on earth I could have remembered such minor details. I looked at her and said, "When you talk to me I do not only listen

to you, I envision what you are telling me. I see what you see, and feel what you feel when you are relating to me." She was dumbfounded.

Let me give you another example. I had been couching a director of an international company from the time he had assumed the position of a manager. One day, he was publicly confronted by one of the manual workers, who was not only arrogant but also impertinent and disobedient. Unfortunately, the manager at that time was too incompetent to handle this situation effectively. During my couching sessions I had to enlighten him and steer him along the right path to deal with such problems.

Three years later, when he became a director, he was surprised that I had remembered the incident. My answer was, "When you were relating the incident to me, I did not only listen to you, but I also created a picture of the situation in my mind. When I advised you not to get publicly involved in such heated arguments and to remain calm and composed and to summon that person to your office, I envisioned one thing. I envisioned the infuriated worker walking to your office ten minutes later. I pictured him becoming less arrogant, more insecure, humble and uncomfortable with every step he made towards your office. I envisioned and I remembered." This simple, authentic explanation of how I remember leaves them all electrified.

I will give you one last example to punctuate the importance of listening. Walking out of a company one day, I met one of my ex-students. He was a very smart worker, who had assumed a managerial position within a relatively short period of time. When we saw each other, we both stopped, smiled and shook hands. However, I did two additional things. I said, "How are you, Thomas?" After he had answered enthusiastically, I said, "And how is your son?" and I mentioned the name of his son. Simple, isn't it?

His smile widened, his eyes flickered and I saw the deference that crept onto his face. He said to me, "You remember my son's name after so many years?" We exchanged a few inconsequential remarks about his current responsibilities at work and parted. When he turned to walk away, I saw pride in his eyes and I noticed how he became taller as he walked into the

company. And all I did was to acknowledge his presence with a smile, a word of greeting, mentioned both his and his son's name and gave him a manly handshake. Yes, the manly handshake was there also, as it is inextricably connected with communications.

What is the moral? Listen and remember, and the information will come in handy in the future. If you do not agree with me, then ask yourself one question. How would you feel if others did not remember your name or the name of your children or for that matter, did not even remember that you were married and had children?

## 14. THE COMPATIBILITY MODE

### **Mood Matching**

Your posture is flawless, your attire is impeccable or at least appropriate to the circumstances. Your strides are as graceful and vibrant as those of an animal moving with a clear intention. You are aware of the amount of eye contact you should maintain. You have acquired the attributes of a good communicator. Now the time has come for you to match mood with others, grab and keep their attention and exert your influence on them.

Imagine yourself jumping into a conversation, in which the communicators were sluggish and lacking energy. Should you inject additional energy into your body? Should you energize your voice? Should you light up your face and eyes with excitement? Of course not. Should you do so, you would be out of tune and out of alignment with them. They would feel as if they were brutally dragged out of their lethargy. This would generate anger and frustration.

Now, imagine joining a group of energetic, excited people, gesticulating freely and speaking with great intensity in their voice. How should you behave? Should you remain calm and composed? Should you suppress the energy level of your body? I think that by now you have grasped my message. You now know that you should be compatible, by replicating their mood. Of course, please do not get me wrong. Matching mood does not mean that we should replicate their behavior throughout the whole conversation.

If someone is sad and gloomy when relating their story to you, you should mirror their behavior and empathize with them until they feel comfortable and secure in your presence. Only then can you try to drag them out of their despondency. If you want to take someone with you from the first floor to the second floor, you obviously need to build an escalator. If you match their mood, both verbally and non-verbally, then you have

succeeded in building the escalator. Conversely, if someone is ecstatic when relating their story to you, do not be morose and do not be phlegmatic. It would be like dumping a bucket of ice cold water over them. It would wash the joy out of them and kill the conversation before it even begins. Mind you, I am not saying that we should jump up with joy for the next 20 minutes. I mean, if you feel physically fit and in the jumping mood, well go ahead and do as you wish. You will get tired very quickly.

Simply strive towards matching their mood without going to the extreme. After you have done so, you may need to bring the person from the second floor back to the ground floor. You do so by building the escalator. Firstly, you gain their trust and affinity by matching their mood, and only then can you try to navigate them in the required direction. How long you remain in the compatibility mode depends on the seriousness of the situation and what you would like to achieve. The rule is that you should first strive for compatibility.

Let me give you two life examples. In one case, the compatibility mode was never initiated. In the other case, it was beautifully executed. Upon entering the conference room to conduct self-improvement training, I noticed one of my students sitting all by herself in the corner. It was 15 minutes before schedule, so she was alone in the room. Her head was lowered, her shoulders were slumped and she seemed to have been crying. I quietly approached her and took a seat. I did not greet her. I simply sat down beside her. She knew that someone had entered the room and had sat down beside her, but did not realize that I was that person.

After a few minutes of silence, she looked up and when she saw me sitting next to her, with a sad expression on my face, she was surprised. This jolted her out of her despondency for a few seconds. She apologized for not noticing me and asked me what I was doing there. I explained to her that when I entered the room, I noticed that something was wrong. I noticed that she was sad and stressed, so I wanted to sit next to her and feel what she was feeling. I wanted to share some of my good energy with her.

This explanation was so amusing to her that it evoked a smile. She looked at me and was gratified that someone had noticed her. Having realized that I was on her side, she went on to tell me why she was in such a lousy mood. It so happened that she had overheard that she was on the firing list. And the information was coming from the right source. I matched mood with her and once I had gained her trust, I went on to pull her up the escalator. I did not have too much time, so I told her to consider all the things that were hindering her in the company. I told her to consider that it could be the breakthrough for her and that with her expertise, she would easily find a better job in another company. The hope and relief that crept into her eyes told me that the message had sunk in and that I was successful in taking her from the first floor to the second floor.

She indeed lost her job, but secured employment in another company within one month. She was happy at her new company. She was fulfilled. You see, it doesn't make sense consoling people too long because they will remain in the same lousy mood. Be pragmatic. You have lost your job, so do not cry over spilt milk. Seek positive things in such negative situations and you will gain energy and motivation to get up and fight.

Now let me relate to you an interesting case when the compatibility mode was never initiated. I was entering the conference room of a company one day when a student of mine exclaimed loudly that he had lost a small fortune on the stock market. He had been checking his earnings on the Internet and the bad results made him explode. I remember the silence that suddenly hung in the room, when another student retorted maliciously that he should have first stopped to consider the consequences of gambling.

You could hear a pin drop. I had to react quickly. I immediately jumped in and built two escalators. I built one escalator for the poor worker who had lost a fortune. I built another escalator for the other poor worker who did not understand the essence of matching mood. Although it was not the topic on my agenda, it was a good pretext to introduce and discuss the gravity of striving towards the compatibility mode.

Some people call it creating rapport. Even if you may be in disagreement with someone, let them know that you understand why they may have a particular point of view. Once they feel that you are not attacking them or

criticizing them harshly, then there is a better chance that they will allow you to lead them in the right direction. Once you create rapport, communication becomes a pleasure.

## 15. MUNDANITY

### Small Talk

Just as we draw people's attention with our physical attributes, we will attract them with the words that are reaching their ears or repel them, for that matter. When we enter a conversation we do not jump straight to the point. We usually initiate small talk. Small talk is analogous to foreplay. If executed properly and with precision, it will pave the way for big talk on more substantive topics. Then you can say that you are on your way to reaching your goal of becoming a conversationalist.

The beautiful and unique thing about the weather is that it appears everywhere. Regardless of where you are, you can use it as an ice breaker. I call it the weather breaker. The essence of the matter is that a few inconsequential remarks may lead to more meaningful topics. For example, when talking about the weather, you can move on to the impact it may have on your punctuality at work. This, in itself, may be a stimulus to talk about the advantages and disadvantages of working flexible hours. Again, this may stimulate discussions of whether employees should be given the opportunity to work from home or not. So, as you see, one inconsequential remark of the weather can trigger other topics. I call it the art of migrating in so many topical directions. It all depends on the participants. It depends on the way you communicate with others. If you are both verbally and non-verbally with them, they will reciprocate. Remember, the energy is there. The genuine smile is present. The right tonality is there. The compatibility mode has been reached. The communication protocol is set. So, moving from one topic to another becomes natural.

If you are attending a self-improvement training or a presentation, ask or say anything related to this. It can be the venue, the topic, the presenter, the duration of the presentation, anything. This will for sure be a good pretext for someone in the group to share their opinion on another self-

improvement course. And you may end up acquiring knowledge on a totally different topic. Remember, people like sharing their knowledge because it makes them feel important and elevates their self-esteem. All you need to do is prompt them by asking a question related to the circumstances.

Even the most commonplace question of where you come from can trigger the conversation. It depends how you ask this question. If you are sincere in your behavior, you maintain eye contact and show them that you are indeed curious, then they will draw themselves wholeheartedly into the conversation. They will readily talk about and promote their cities or countries. They may then go on to talk about their homes, families and work. If they happen to be disillusioned about their life and society, they will eagerly talk about that. This is because everyone is waiting for the chance to express their emotions.

If you are a good conversationalist and you have the ability to listen and ingest when others are talking, then they will feel fulfilled and will move on in so many topical directions. You may meet someone at the hotel bar. Open the conversation door by asking them how frequently they stay at the hotel. This appetizer may lead them to talk about the reasons for choosing that particular hotel or even the purpose of their visit. It takes only a few seconds to get people in the conversation mood. Once you set the right atmosphere and they detect your friendliness, they will open up and get fully involved in the discussion, even if you are a stranger.

## **Coffee – The Tongue Loosener**

Let me give you an example of a trivial and mundane remark that evoked a conversation which lasted over two hours. I was returning home by train after a long and exhausting project management convention. We had been engaged in analyzing the role of a project manager in achieving the ultimate goal of the project. We had been discussing the art of interaction with the stakeholders. Anyway, as I boarded the train, my only intention was to hibernate myself for the next two hours, so as to regain my vitality before the next meeting.

Apart from me, the only passenger in the compartment was a middle-aged woman, nursing a Starbucks coffee in her hand. I greeted her cordially and after my body had got acquainted with the seat, I looked at her with a smile, pointed to her coffee and said, "I see you have equipped yourself with the right tool for this long journey." One mundane remark. Her eyes lit up immediately, her body jerked into liveliness and her vocal chords were activated.

She told me that she had had an exhausting day and her body was craving for coffee. She went on to talk about her affinity to Starbucks. For the next two hours, she talked about her current job, her children, her ex-husband and the reason for their divorce. She even told me about her tentative plans to establish her own company. After we had weighed the feasibility of her new endeavor, she decided right then and there to stop procrastinating and take the first step towards fulfilling her dreams.

Imagine, it all started with mundanity about coffee. But mundane as your ice breaker may be, you should always make sure that you are delivering it properly. Smile, initiate eye contact and maintain a positive attitude. Do not ever complain about your health, about your age, about your job, surroundings or even the weather conditions. Remember that people formulate their opinion of you during the first few minutes of your encounter. Once you are perceived as a whiner, they will retreat into their cocoon. Most likely, you will not get a chance to show that deep down you are a nice and empathetic person. If you are nasty, sarcastic and biting, then you will be perceived as a skunk and people will keep their distance.

The most mundane question you can ask somebody is, "How are you?" However, the answer they give is an eloquent reflection of their personality. Some people, regardless of their present state of mind or situation, always give negative self-deprecating answers like:

- So so
- It could be better
- I'm managing somehow
- Nothing interesting
- Fairly decent

In some cases, they just grunt or snort and say something negative about their life or health.

My answers are different. I usually say: "Fine" or "Great" or "Perfect." I even go to the extremes to say, "Absolutely fantastic." I react in this way for two reasons. First of all, no one wants to listen to you complaining about your life, your misfortune or your poor health. Secondly, if you keep repeating to yourself that you feel great and you empower this with the right tonality and body language, then you are on the right path to convincing yourself that it is indeed great. If you do not control your thoughts, you will be controlled by your thoughts.

Do you remember the famous quote? It says, "Your mind in its own place and in itself can make a heaven out of hell and a hell out of heaven." If you are nasty, sarcastic and biting and you harbor negative thoughts, then you are on the way to becoming a permanent showstopper. Your surroundings will quickly pick up the message you are sending and avoid further interaction. You become ostracized. Do you want to be ostracized? I don't think so.

# 16. THE ART OF INTERACTION

*(Extract from my Amazon book “Assertiveness Mastery”)*

## Criticism

It is normal that when we achieve success at work, a few of our colleagues will become jealous and negative emotions will accumulate in their system. These emotions stifle them and make them suffer and at some point they feel the irresistible urge to strike out at you in order to gain some satisfaction and compensation. They will find flaws in your achievements at work and then proceed to criticize you. Assertive people treat this kind of unjust criticism in a special way. They consider it to be a hidden compliment delivered by those who find it difficult to manage their thoughts effectively. This allows them to remain unruffled. They do not even try to defend themselves because explanations will only make jealous people feel happy.

Let me give you an example. A student of mine was promoted to the position of project manager due to her outstanding performance in several projects and the positive influence she had on other team members. This aroused the feeling of jealousy in one of her team mates, who lashed out by proclaiming that getting a promotion in the company was related to knowing the right people and not to one's expertise. My student looked at her with a smile and said, “That is an interesting way to put it.” She then continued working as if nothing had happened. This reaction left the sufferer suffering even more. My philosophy is simple. If you are picking on me because of your inferiority complex and your inability to manage your emotions, then I will simply stand by and allow you to eat yourself from the inside.

Another kind of criticism is destructive criticism. It usually comes from aggressive people, with a condescending attitude. Their natural inclination to use damaging remarks could be a result of their low self-esteem. If this person happens to be your boss and the feedback is substantive, then

ignore the biting remarks and tend towards making improvements. It is quite normal that you will be enraged. However, you need to be assertive enough to manage your anger. Tell yourself that you are wise enough not to allow yourself to be provoked because once you lose control, you may end up misbehaving. It is enough that the boss has a very low boiling point.

If the person providing feedback is a co-worker, then you could say, "Hey Tom. Stop! I appreciate your feedback and I agree that you may have a point there. However, I would like you to be a bit more subtle when addressing me as it spoils the atmosphere."

Do not raise your voice and when talking, use the palm down gesture to reinforce your statement. Another alternative would be to just look at the worker and remain silent. Silence will show him that you have no intention of accepting such ill behavior.

## **Feedback Part 1**

You have noticed that one of your subordinates is falling behind with his tasks, which is hampering the progress of the other team members. In addition, the work he was able to complete is of poor quality and requires modifications. His estimation of the work effort for his project deliverables is usually alarmingly high in comparison to other workers who had worked on similar tasks. The other team members are losing their patience and tolerance as they are forced to make up for his negligence. A passive boss or worker would spend their precious time correcting his mistakes even though it irritates them. They would not bring his attention to the problem, but wait until he is not in the department and then rage over his inadequacy. The worker may eventually become the laughing stock of the department without even realizing his defects.

The aggressive boss would publicly humiliate the worker for his stupidity, for his incompetence. He would most likely use abrasive sentences like, "How could you have made such stupid mistakes? You need to think." He would then go on to remind the worker of how lucky he was to still be working for the company as he would have difficulties getting a job elsewhere. This kind of reaction would most likely make the recipient

dispirited and lower his self-esteem and consequently, his productivity. How many times have you seen this happening at the work place? How many times did it happen to you at school? Unfortunately, it also happens at home. Remember, it is impossible to pull back the bitter words that leave your mouth. They will have a disastrous effect on the self-confidence of the recipient and destroy their positive energy. Consequently, it becomes difficult for them to improve their performance. This results in the vicious circle.

An assertive boss will clearly communicate the worker's mistakes without attacking their personal qualities. He will concentrate on how to get the worker back on the right path and do so in a calm and friendly way. He will conduct the conversation in his office to allow the worker to maintain his dignity. He will create rapport with the worker by showing that he is willing to support him in order to improve the situation. By behaving in such a manner, it becomes easier for the worker to confide in him. Maybe the worker has been going through some difficult times in his personal life or maybe the worker has been having problems to understand the requirements. Whatever the reason, only proper communication will allow you to isolate the facts, gain control of the situation and achieve a win-win result. This is what we call constructive criticism. It is usually delivered by assertive individuals, by people who are emotionally intelligent. Once you are assertive, you will be able to create an atmosphere that is conducive for top performance and people will be happy to come to work and render more services.

## **Feedback Part 2**

Managers who lack assertiveness may refrain from giving constructive feedback to their subordinates. Even though their intention is to improve the performance of their employees, they are afraid that it would annoy them, destroy the relationship and demotivate the workers. Instead of remaining passive and allowing the whole department to crumble, it would be better to use the sandwich feedback technique. In this technique,

constructive feedback lies between two layers of praise, which serve as a buffer and make it easier and less painful for both parties.

Let me give you an example. Your new employee has completed a difficult task on time. However, you noticed a few flaws which were related to insufficient analysis of the requirements. In this case, the first layer of praise would be, “Rob, you have done a great job. The screen shows both grid views and the partial search functionality is working perfectly.” This layer serves to create rapport with the worker as you have appreciated his hard work. You have just built a bridge that you will need to take him across to his mistakes. Now, you can continue with the negative part of your feedback, “I noticed that you forgot to include the additional column that was mentioned on page 14. Please check the requirements once again and implement.” The worker is still feeling good and may even apologize for the mistake because of the friendly atmosphere you have created. Now, you can apply the last layer of the sandwich, “By the way, I like the way you implemented the slide-out panel and pagination.”

The aggressive boss would most likely say, “Rob! You did not read the requirements. Look here! Where is the additional grid view column? The next time you deliver something to me, make sure you test it thoroughly.”

One of your top sales representatives tends to leave the company without asking for permission every time he is working onsite. In this case, you could let him know that you are aware of his good results and his consistency in reaching his sales target. After that, tell him that you would like him to leave work at 5 p.m. just like all other workers. At the end, add a touch of praise by telling him that you are pleased with the good relationship he has built with his customers. Some people argue that the sandwich feedback method may undermine the feedback. However, I personally consider it to be effective, especially when dealing with oversensitive workers, who are easily offended. Remember, assertiveness is the ability to get what you want without humiliating people.

## SECTION 3

# **PRESENTATION AS A FORM OF COMMUNICATION**



# 17. ENHANCE YOUR PRESENTATION SKILLS

## Good Preparation

Presentation is the art of interaction between the presenter and the audience. The message that is being delivered must be eagerly picked up by the recipients. As you already know, in the normal every day communication, we concentrate on the message our conversation partners are sending to us. During the presentation, however, we need to draw their attention to the topic of the presentation. The only way we can do so is by drawing their attention to us. This is why people are so afraid of conducting presentation. The mere thought of a presentation makes them feel nauseated and stressed. They would prefer to die than to present in front of a group of people. So, what can we do to seize the attention of the audience and become great presenters? It is obvious that we need to have good knowledge and understanding of the topic. This will allow us to convince the audience and handle whatever questions they may have.

The mistake that people make is that they do not practice before the presentation. Once you are prepared for the presentation, you should spend time presenting your topic to yourself in the seclusion of your home, preferably in front of the mirror. Practice until you become perfect. After that, get a member or members of your family to see you in action. Treat their feedback seriously and make amendments where necessary. You can even go one step forward by delivering your presentation to your colleagues at work. It all depends on the importance of the presentation and the audience you will have to confront. I'm not saying that you have to go through the rigmarole of presenting to so many people before the actual delivery.

Use your judgement and weigh the seriousness of the situation. In any case, the fact that you are repeating your presentation over and over again will make you feel stronger and more knowledgeable. You will feel more

confident during the presentation, because your brain becomes accustomed to the situation. In addition to physically going through the steps of the presentation, you can also rehearse it mentally. This is defined as auto-suggestion and it is related to a mental review of the presentation.

Auto suggestion is a technique that is used to consciously control the thoughts that you are sending to your subconscious mind. If these thoughts are accompanied by faith and true emotions, then the subconscious mind will accept them and render the appropriate results. Use this technique when preparing for your presentation and you will eliminate fear and enhance your performance. You have rehearsed in front of the mirror. You have rehearsed in front of your family members. Go one step further, use the law of auto suggestion and practice your presentation in your mind's eye.

Envision yourself standing in the auditorium in front of the audience. See yourself looking good and feeling good. Truly feel the composure and confidence you possess. See yourself going through the steps of your presentation and having an extremely positive impact on the crowd. You are smiling genuinely, maintaining eye contact with the audience and gesticulating freely. Your non-verbal signals are in congruence with your content. You are moving and drawing their attention with every step you take. You have aroused their interest and they are reciprocating with the look of affection and respect. Their smile is authentic and they are non-verbally communicating their satisfaction and gratitude. These are the images you must accumulate in your subconscious mind. Be conscientious and instill a sense of discipline to pump such images into your subconscious mind.

Do it regularly. Do it wholeheartedly. Feel the right emotions related to these images. Your brain will react accordingly. When you go there on the big day, your brain will render the confident feeling and you will deliver the presentation with great precision. This is simply because the brain had had ample time to get acquainted with the situation. You fueled your subconscious mind with positive thoughts and your subconscious mind will reciprocate. And one more thing. On the day of the presentation, before leaving your home, take a last look at yourself in the mirror. Say

loudly that you look good, feel good and that you will deliver a memorable presentation. Look at yourself and feel the surge of confidence in your whole body. Now, leave your home, go there and entertain the audience.

## **The Tone of Voice**

Listening is the act of decoding the verbal message that is being transmitted to the ear. However, for this to happen the listener needs to be inspired and magnetized by the voice that is reaching them. The voice should keep them engaged and enraptured throughout the conversation or presentation. The tone of voice conveys your mood. It conveys your emotions. It conveys your intentions. If it is used properly, it can serve as a powerful tool to enhance your presentation. Unfortunately, if misused, it can lead to disaster right at the beginning of the presentation. The audience will disconnect both socially and emotionally and you lose your chance to share your knowledge.

Some people are naturally gifted with a warm, congenial tone of voice that has a positive impact on the audience. When they speak, there is unity between the tone of voice and the content of the message they are relaying. This allows them to clearly define their intention. The voice is melodic when they are excited or passionate when they want to arouse your interest. Skilled orators are aware that they must speak in a way that will make them audible even at the back of the auditorium. However, at key moments they modify the volume, sometimes louder or softer, to accentuate the meaning and enchant the audience. They increase the intonation to put emphasis on certain words or sentences. They articulate each word with great accuracy to ensure that the audience grasp the meaning.

Remember, it is not what you say, it is how you say what you say. It is the tone that puts life and credibility into your words. If you believe what you say, the crowd will be easily convinced. It is said that around 38% of the impression you make on the audience is derived from your tonality. So, follow these steps scrupulously and you will cover almost half the distance

to reaching your goal. The goal is to keep the audience enthralled until the end. The goal is for them to give you a standing ovation as a sign of gratitude.

## **The Power of Pauses**

Whenever I write an email to my co-workers, be it a short email or a long email, I break it down into smaller comprehensible parts. I simply click on the enter key a few times so as to insert some white space between my thoughts. I do so simply because I want them to fully understand the content of my message. I want them to digest the significance of each thought. Otherwise, it would lead to confusion and misunderstanding. I sometimes highlight key points and use bullet points and exclamation marks to put emphasis on the sentence. This is the strategy I would like you to use when you are conducting a presentation.

Do not wait until you have spoken a whole sentence before pausing. Do not wait until you have finished the whole paragraph or presentation before pausing. This will leave you breathless, as if you had been running up a hill. The audience, on the other hand, will be disoriented. I have seen it happening so many times. Presenters walk up on the stage, break into a vocal sprint and finish the speech before the audience have had time to gather their thoughts. When people listen to you, they may not even remember the words you use. They concoct or draw a picture in their minds that helps them to grasp the essence of your presentation. You therefore need to pause to give them ample time to create their picture, digest the content and connect with you.

Great orators pause after three or four words or sometimes after the first or second word to increase the impact on the audience. Do not be afraid to pause. Utilize silence to enhance your delivery. Pause to allow your audience to absorb the meaning of your words. Pause to punctuate your sentence. Pause to take a breath and pump more oxygen to the brain. Pause to swallow saliva or else you will end up spraying the audience. When you pause you come across as a strong and confident person, a strong and confident person who is in control of the situation. It also gives you a

feeling of power. Pause and enhance your impact on the audience. Observe great speakers like Bill Clinton and Barack Obama and you will see what I mean.

## **Presentation - Life Example**

A few years ago, I had the opportunity to participate in a convention related to presentation skills. Each participant was required to prepare and conduct a 5-minute presentation in front of the whole group. All presentations were recorded and afterwards showed on a very large screen, which revealed even the most subtle body signals. Even though it was supposed to be a short presentation and the topic was trivial, I took it seriously. Firstly I prepared the content of my presentation and made it my duty to get fully acquainted with it. I practiced a few times in front of the mirror and I rehearsed it in my mind, using the law of auto-suggestion.

On the day of the presentation, just before entering the auditorium, I noticed two things. Around 30% of the attendees has absconded. It seemed as though they had suddenly recalled that they had something more interesting and less stressful to do that morning. The fear of presenting in front of a group of VIPs had engulfed and paralyzed them. The remaining 70% were walking back and forth, trying to reassure themselves, trying to summon the courage to go through the ordeal that was awaiting them behind those huge doors of the auditorium.

I was calm and composed because I had done my homework at home, on the train and in the hotel. I had prepared and I had rehearsed both my verbal and non-verbal message. When we all walked into the room, I was looking confident and feeling confident. When I finished my presentation, I became the most popular person throughout the convention. Anyway, let me reveal to you the flaws I noticed during the 2-hour presentation session.

There was total incongruence between the verbal and non-verbal communication of the presenters. The body was saying, "I don't want to be here. I am nervous and intimidated." When presenters were leaning against

the desk or standing behind the chair, they were non-verbally telling us that they were seeking refuge. When they averted their eyes, they were subconsciously telling us that they didn't want us to detect the fear and insecurity their eyes would betray. When their bodies swayed towards the door, they were indicating very clearly that they would like the nightmare to abruptly end and be allowed to abandon the room. Even though their vocal chords were active, there was no topical cohesion with their bodies. Their bodies were vulnerable. If they had understood and diligently followed the rules related to presentation, they would not have blundered.

During the 2-hour session, I also noticed one very important correlation. All the presenters, who delivered compelling presentation were immaculately dressed. Their attire did not only make them look smart, but elevated their self-esteem and self-confidence. The rule is so simple. If the merit is in place, you become indomitable. If you had done your physical and mental rehearsal, you will crave to share your knowledge. If you cover your body with the right clothes, you will feel exceptional and ingenious. Should you do so, there will be no problem to make your body work in unison with your vocal chords and your mind. This is how you captivate the audience and keep them spellbound for as long as you wish. This is what distinguishes a charismatic speaker from a bore. This is what determines whether the audience will be disquiet, fidgety or still and focused.

## SECTION 4

# **HOW TO SPOT A LIAR**

# 18. THE TRUTH BEHIND THE LIE

## Introduction

Upon purchasing this book, readers may have different expectations about what they will achieve upon its completion. My anticipation is that you do not only want to enhance your communication skills, but to be able to detect when someone was lying to you during the encounter. This is why I have included this section to provide you the tools to help you to detect deceitfulness in multiple situations in your life. Some people may want to use these tools to test the trustworthiness of their family members or friends. Others may use them for business situations, for example, during a negotiation. Regardless of your intentions, the fact remains the same. We human beings are programmed to behave in a particular way and we all emit physical cues which will expose our true feelings and show that we are lying.

Lie Detection is related to the ability to read and decipher the meaning of the non-verbal signals emitted by a liar. It is inextricably connected to understanding the movements, position shifts and expressions of various parts of the human body. This is simply because, whenever a person lies, their subconscious mind is diligently trying to force the truth out of their body. The only way it can do so is by at least taking some control over the body movements. I am sure that many times in the past you were able to instantaneously detect whether or not somebody was lying. The chances are that this person was very young, perhaps an eight year old son or daughter. The reason you were able to detect their little lies so easily is very simple. They were too young to have had a chance to practice and develop the atrocious art of deceitfulness. Their mind had not been contaminated by the outside world. I can promise you one thing though. As time goes by, they will get better at it. With every lie they tell, they will learn. Just like with any other skill they develop over the next few decades, their skill of deception will improve.

The human brain is basically a big sponge and the knowledge in this world is the liquid. The only problem is that not all liquid is clear. Over the years, the human brain has absorbed a generous amount of filth and garbage, one of which is the infamous lie. There is no pleasant way to say this, but we are all liars. I am a liar. You are a liar. Everyone you have ever met is in some way a liar. The only thing that might be different is the size and the impact of the lie. Some people can go through their lives telling only small, tiny white lies that may only have positive outcomes. However, there are some other people, politicians for example, who have indeed become hardcore liars. When they tell a lie, they are lying to the whole nation in order to get through the elections and gain or maintain power.

The world is not perfect. It is driven by unhealthy ambition and greed for money. One of the ways to endure is by acquiring specific tools to shield yourself to the best of your ability. One of these tools is the power of lie detection. Please note that some non-verbal gestures from previous parts of this book may be repeated in this section. This is simply because I want to put more emphasis on the role of a particular non-verbal signal during the lie.

## **The Lie Masquerade**

Before we get into the actual process of decoding body signals that give liars away, there is one more thing that I have to tell you and I consider it to be incredibly important. I am sure that at some time in your life you watched a show called The X Factor or American idol. You most likely noticed that a large number of contestants who auditioned were horrific. Their pitch was all over the place, their tone of voice was not pleasant to the human ear or they were lacking charisma. The judges would ask them which singer they would compare themselves to or how successful they thought they could become. Surprisingly, their answers were often very similar: “I think I’m the next Celine Dion” or “I truly believe that I can sell tens of millions of records.” In some cases, you were able to read the non-verbal signals and deduce that they were lying. Why they came there

in the first place remains a mystery. However, in the majority of cases, if you paid close attention, you would realize that they were actually not lying. How is it possible that they could claim to be incredible singers and yet the body language did not give them away?

Well, someone could argue that they may have read a book like this one and had therefore learned to detect lies, and were simply using it in reverse to lie better. The answer to this question, however, is simple. These people are just not aware of their incapability. They have convinced themselves that they are great singers or polite family members and friends have misled them into believing that they are indeed extraordinary. As a result, their bodies will not emit the usual lying signals. The subconscious mind has been deceived. Now, this example may be considered as being too simplistic or superficial. Nevertheless, it leads to something more significant.

Usually, when somebody lies, it is very quick and dynamic, and it is a result of the conversation that is currently taking place. However, some people, for many different reasons, at some point in their life, may be forced to create a lie that is bigger and more significant than the usual white lies. Now, as a result of this, their minds will focus even more on concealing that lie and they will put more and more effort into hiding the truth. When it comes to a lie of this magnitude, they will also have to repeat it over and over again to many different people in many different situations. Because of all this focus, effort and repetition, an interesting thing may happen after an extended period of time. The liar starts to believe his own lie. After all, his subconscious mind has been fed with distorted information on a continual basis. The liar will now not only lie to other people. He will also lie to himself.

This will eventually lead to a phenomenon I refer to as The Lie Masquerade. It is a state of mind when even the liar's subconscious mind does not fully realize that a lie has been told. Therefore, the lying signals become more difficult or even impossible to detect. This usually occurs in the case of politicians. Now, this is a group of people who are believed to be very prone to lying. Let's face facts. Some of them lie, or bend the truth on a systematic basis. As a result, their Lie Masquerade has been taken to

a higher level of excellence. For them lying has become automatic. For them, the line between the lie and the truth is not even blurred. It is invisible.

## **Trust your Instincts**

As you have already learnt in other parts of this book, the signals that can help you spot a liar are subconsciously emitted by the liar himself, with the exception of a few cases. The words leaving the mouth may say one thing, while the body may say exactly the opposite. This is because the brain is sending commands to the body to reveal the truth. In other words, the lie is breaking out of its chains. It is interesting to note that a very similar thing happens to your own subconscious mind, when someone is lying to you. Some people call it instincts or intuition and others may simply define it as a gut feeling. No matter what we call it, the fact is that it is real and it indeed works.

When you are being lied to, your instincts immediately start sending signals to you, to let you know that something is not right. You may not be able to diagnose the deception. However, you get the strange feeling that something is out of place and you need to be on guard. Of course, for various people, the actual strength and accuracy of this inborn skill can be completely different. This is why some people can be considered more or less naive, whereas others are regarded as highly perceptive. However, no matter how powerful or how weak your initial gut feeling is, it can always be enhanced once you have acquired the knowledge to read and understand gestures and expressions. The bottom line is that when you have that strange gut feeling that somebody is lying to you, you should never ignore it. Instead, use it as a kick starter to your lie detector and then try to recognize all the small changes in their body language that will eventually give them away.

## **Observation is the Key**

Even though knowledge of the body language of a liar is imperative to successfully seeing through their deceit, it is not everything. There is another ingredient that is equally important and you always have to take it into account. This ingredient is the pre-observation phase. This is one of the things that people often forget when analyzing body language. Not everybody is the same. You may erroneously regard a particular gesture as being related to a lie, when it may simply be a tic for some people. The spasmodic contraction of the facial muscles or the involuntary movements of their fingers or eyes on a daily basis may not even be remotely connected to a lie. Someone may cross their legs during a conversation, but does it automatically mean that they are subconsciously trying to defend themselves? Perhaps yes, but what if in reality they just had a bladder infection and the leg-cross brought them temporary relief and made them feel more comfortable?

In order to avoid such misinterpretations, you need to acquire more information about their habits before you start analyzing their body language. The simplest way to do this is to observe their reaction when you ask them a variety of questions. You have to choose questions that you know for certain will not trigger a lie. For instance, if you are in a business meeting and you are trying to negotiate a contract with a client, you will have the opportunity to ask your questions during the small talk period. Ask simple questions like: "How is your day going so far?" If you see a picture on the desk, of the negotiating party and his kid playing basketball, you could say, "How often do you get the chance to have a match like that?" or "Nice picture. How old is your son?" Basically, you want to ask them questions that will most likely make them feel at ease. This will allow you to observe their normal reaction, their genuine body language. As time goes by, and you are getting closer to the actual negotiation, you can start steering the conversation into a more professional direction. You could then say, "I see that you have created a great company. How long did it take you to accomplish your goal?"

After you have completed your observation and analysis, you will notice the patterns in their behavior. Once the negotiation starts, it will be easier

for you to decipher the real meaning of their body language and ultimately end the conversation in your favor, hopefully with a profitable deal.

Remember, lie detection is obviously not something you can master by just learning the theory. It needs practice. This is why I would like to challenge you to start your observation for the signs of deception as soon as you finish this book. Learn to trust your instincts. The next time you are talking to someone, who is infamous for lying or bending the truth, start your experiment. Get engaged in small talk. Talk about something simple, even silly, and observe how their body behaves. Then, move on to a different topic, something you know might make them feel uncomfortable and might force them to lie or be dishonest. Observe the changes in their behavior to confirm that they are in fact being deceitful. Practice and you will boost your awareness.

## 19. THE ACT OF LYING

### **Listen Attentively**

One of the biggest mistakes you can make while you're trying to decipher someone's lies is when you actually help them to sustain the lie. This is because it is not just the body language that will give them away. It is the thing that they say or the things that they do not say. Sometimes when somebody is concocting a lie, it is because of the information they do not have rather than the information they do have. This happens on a daily basis with students at school or at university when they are being questioned by the teacher. Whenever they are not prepared to face the storm of questions coming from the teacher, they literally dodge or dance around them. They may end up giving an answer related to a totally different topic. They are trying to delude the teacher into thinking that they are in fact knowledgeable, when in reality they do not have the foggiest idea of how to tackle the question. If you, the teacher, are not aware of this strategic move, your subconscious mind may lead you towards filling in the blanks for them. This means that you may find yourself unintentionally providing answers and clarifications to your own questions. This is why it is imperative to always be able to see through their intentions and prevent this from happening.

If you notice that somebody is having difficulty answering a question, try not to help them. Give them time. Let them speak. See what kind of information they are going to give you without your guidance. Otherwise, you may find yourself answering the question for them and ultimately you will end up not knowing whether or not they knew the answer or were lying. To summarize, if you suspect that somebody is concocting a lie, stay calm, listen to them, see how the situation plays out. Do not let them drag you into their lie, because they will try to use you to strengthen their deceitfulness. Furthermore, when you listen you have more time to observe.

There is one very interesting thing I would like to discuss in this part and I believe it to be of utmost importance. It is actually an example from Adam's childhood. Adam is the person responsible for the whole production process of our online courses on Udemy. The incident took place when Adam was still a student at secondary school. The whole class was supposed to read a book and then after a certain period of time, they were to be questioned on the contents of the book by the teacher. Adam, who didn't find the choice of that book particularly interesting, did not read it and hence he was not prepared for the test. Being an extremely smart kid he decided he would talk himself out of the test, which meant that he was prepared to fabricate a lie. As he was a very good observer, he knew that a regular lie would not work in the case of that particular teacher. Many times he had observed other students lying to teachers and knew that their lies were not very refined and the teachers could easily see through them. You know, things like, "I'm not prepared because I was seriously ill" or "I was at my grandma's funeral." Therefore, he decided to put an extra effort into concocting a lie that would seem plausible.

The big day finally came. Adam remained calm and composed and waited to execute his plan. After about ten students had been questioned, it was now his turn to face the music. Once he got called out, he leaned forward with his arms open and answered with one simple sentence, "I'm sorry, but I spoke to you two weeks ago and you told me that it would be alright for me to take the test on Friday." Now, what happened in the teacher's brain after hearing that? Firstly, she tried to recall when and where she had spoken to him and secondly, which is more important, whether she should accuse him of lying. The lie that Adam created was not something that she could instantly reject. Her first option was to accuse him of lying, which at the same time would put her on the spot, because perhaps he was telling the truth and that would actually make her a liar. The second option was to just let it go and move on to the next student. She obviously decided to go with the latter.

Adam spent the remaining thirty minutes listening to all the questions asked by the teacher and all the answers provided by the students. By Friday he was fully prepared for the oral test and passed with flying

colors. Now, what is the moral of this story? The moral is that some lies might be very simple and yet so well thought out that you will have a hard time deciding whether it is a lie or not. And even though you suspect that it is actually a lie, you may feel an urge to assume that the person was telling the truth. This is just because it is the safest thing to do. Even though the example given seems amusing, you have probably found yourself in similar situations and had to give the presumptuous liar the benefit of the doubt.

## **Liars Give Too Much Information**

Another interesting thing about people who lie is that very often they try to give you more information than necessary. They are literally trying to flood you with additional details, because they feel that this will make them more convincing. For example, if you are a parent, then the chances are that on more than one occasion you suspected that your son or daughter had been skipping classes. How did you react? You probably said, “Tommy! Did you go to school today?” Now, as you can see, the question is very simple, however, the answer may not be simple at all. Tommy might have said, “Of course I did! I almost missed the bus. Let me tell you mom, the Physics teacher is really pushing my buttons.” He would then go on and on to talk about school and about other topics related to school. Sure, he may just be the type of kid who talks a lot, but there is a great possibility that he is just feeding his parent a lie that he had concocted prior to the conversation, knowing fully well that he might be confronted.

Now, try to go back to your childhood years. Let’s say you came back from school and your mom asked, “Did you go to school today?” What would be your reaction? Had you gone to school, you would be surprised that she had asked you that question. Your answer would be very simple. Probably something like: “Yeah, why?” This is because you are telling the truth and when you are telling the truth, your mind doesn’t need to dance around the

question. It doesn't feel that it needs to flex its muscles. It just tells the truth, plain and simple.

This is, of course, a trivial, uncomplicated example. However, it can also be applied to lies that are being told by adults, lies that are being told by your employees, by your colleagues, by your boss or your spouse. The rule remains the same. The truth is transparent and straightforward. The lie is filled with unnecessary information and sharp turns.

## 20. PHYSIOLOGICAL CHANGES

### Breathing

People who are relaxed during a conversation have the tendency to breathe in a relaxed way as well. The rhythm will be quite constant and their abdomens will slowly move up and down. If someone were breathing in this way during the encounter, it would most likely mean that they were being sincere to you. However, when you see someone breathing through their chest instead of their abdomen, then this may be a sign of deception. This way of breathing is due to the tension and the anxiety that is felt in the upper chest area when lying. Expanding the chest is supposed to bring relief to the poor, tense upper body. When people lie, they experience stress, which in turn triggers a sudden increase in the secretion of stress hormone. The brain is now going through the process of preparing the liars to defend themselves because lying in itself can be dangerous. This additional effort requires a greater input of oxygen and at the same time they need to get rid of the carbon dioxide that has accumulated in the body. This is why a liar will very often take a deep breath and then quickly exhale with the cheeks puffed out. When they force air out of the body, it is like blowing the stress and tension out of their poor system.

### The Nose Scratch

When people lie, the sympathetic nervous system takes control. The smallest blood vessels in the nose will therefore expand, enabling a greater flow of blood and causing the mucosa of the nose to expand. This will lead to an itching sensation and this is why we may see liars delicately scratching their nose. In the case of a normal itching, we usually do it more vigorously and more openly. In the case of a lie, the scratching is more subtle.

## **Skin Reaction**

You have probably noticed that when people get really nervous, their skin color actually starts to change. They will often blush, with a beautiful red color around the nose, cheeks, ears or neck. This is caused by a very sudden release of adrenaline, which increases the rate at which the heart beats and dilates the blood vessels. This in turn increases the flow of oxygenated blood to the muscles, resulting in the color change. The color change may be the culmination point of the lie, when the liar suspects that he has just been spotted.

## **The sweating Liar**

The secretion of adrenaline also increases the metabolic rate of the body, which leads to an escalation of the body temperature. This is when the liar begins to sweat profusely. Beads of sweat may appear on the forehead and start to roll down the face. Perspiration may also break out in the area between the upper lip and the nose, making it shinier. This happens simply because the body is trying to cool down itself by releasing liquid through the pores of the skin. And this is what unmasks the liar. Observe politicians when they are being interviewed. Whenever their moral integrity is being questioned, they may lash out to keep the focus away from their dishonesty. Such offensive and aggressive reaction may even lead you to believe them. However, the body never lies and the sweat will pour shamelessly out from the body.

## 21. THE BODY SHIFT

### **The hunchback of Notre Dame**

You may assume that people who believe they have gotten away with telling a lie may be very happy with themselves. Why wouldn't they? After all, they have achieved their goal. The truth, however, is quite different. When somebody lies or feels that they have just succeeded in making you believe something that is not true, their emotional state might be very far from being happy. It may be quite the opposite. Many a time their feelings will actually be negative. They will feel emotionally compromised. They will feel ashamed and embarrassed. This is when their body posture may reveal their deceitfulness. These feelings will literally weigh their posture down. They will hunch their backs and lower their heads. The shoulder will become stiff and rigid and will roll forward. They will assume this curled-up position because they subconsciously feel small and want to look small. In addition, by instinctively making themselves smaller, they believe they become less visible and therefore protect themselves from paying the consequences of their deceitfulness.

The exact same thing might happen if somebody did not get away with telling a lie. At the beginning, when they start to feed you with the lie, their position will be upright, arrogant. This is the posture of a strong and confident person. However, as time goes by and it starts to dawn on them that they are not going to get away with the lie, their self-confidence will begin to falter. The less confident they feel, the more hunched they will become and these subtle changes may be easily picked up by the person to whom they are lying. When they eventually turn themselves into that little, ashamed hunchback, you will certainly know that you have caught them red-handed.

## **Leaning Forward**

The liar desperately wants to be believed, to be considered trustworthy. For this particular moment in time, this is their only goal and they must achieve it. This is why their subconscious mind will often force their body to try and trick your mind into thinking that they are being honest. I like to refer to this as The Deceitful Honesty.

To accomplish this fake honesty the liar will very often lean forward to get closer to you. They want to create an aura of intimacy. They want to make you think that if they can get that intimate and that close to you, then they have nothing to hide. Do not fall for this fake feeling of intimacy and security. It is not real and it may be a sign of deception.

## **Backing up**

Backing up is exactly the opposite of leaning forward. Well, this is quite obvious. However, it is not just the opposite in the physical meaning but also in the mental meaning. Backing up may occur at the exact moment the liar has been caught. They will literally get thrown back, as if they had gotten scared and wanted to get away from you, as far as possible. The distance does not have to be big, as the liar may just make a little jerking motion backwards. However, the fact remains unchanged. If someone wants to get away from you, then the chances are that they are being dishonest.

## **Nervous Movements**

We have already established that lie detection is profoundly connected to perceiving whether or not somebody is nervous. As you now know, nervousness can betray the liar by, for example, a sudden jerk backwards. However, it is not just the backing up that you should be looking for. When people get nervous, their whole body will actually start preparing itself for the escape. The secretion of adrenaline increases and the heart beats faster,

creating an excessive amount of energy that needs to be directed somewhere. It will often be released in the form of sudden movements or fidgeting. The liar is desperately trying to stay calm but it is simply not working. The body is now dictating the rules and revealing their dishonesty.

During the interaction, look for all the unusual and abrupt movements that seem to be stiff and unnatural, and you are on your way to spotting the liar. Having said that, I need to point out that the liar's body may sometimes do the exact opposite. It will actually turn into a marble statue, not moving even an inch. Think about a past situation that made you really emotional. Something that had a culmination point. For instance, you were at a football match and you were cheering on your favorite team during the game. You were probably very emotional. You were jumping around, shouting and swearing. Now, what happened right before a very important moment in the game? Some of the spectators might still be showing their excitement by screaming and cheering, however, the others were probably completely still. They were as still as statues, waiting in anticipation for this significant moment. This is very similar to what might happen to the liar's body. The anticipation may be too overwhelming for them. They are waiting for this beautiful moment when you will accept the lie. Or perhaps they are nervous because they realize that you have discovered their true intention.

## 22. THE EYE NEVER LIES

### Eye Language 1

The eye is regarded as the central focal point of the human body that will convey the way you truly feel and think. When people lie, the brain forces them to look away, as it cannot bear the sight of the recipient. Interestingly, some liars develop a strategy of staring with their eyes wide open and without blinking at their victims. At the same time, they will show keen interest in whatever you are saying. The intention is to exercise power over you and at the same time make you feel important and positive about yourself. When a liar's intention has been decoded, they may even glare at you to show their anger at you for even thinking that they could have told a lie. This is simply a form of defense.

As I had mentioned earlier, the movements of the eye balls are an eloquent reflection of whether someone is telling the truth or fabricating a lie. When a right-handed person is lying, they are actually creating an image in their mind, and their eye balls will therefore move up and to the right. In the case of a left-handed person, the eyeballs will move up and to the left when concocting a lie.

If you have just met someone, you may not immediately detect whether they were right-handed or left-handed. However, during the small talk phase you can determine this by asking simple questions that would force them to dig into their visual memory for authentic images. Delving into the visual memory means telling the truth, and their answers would therefore be genuine. These questions could be related to the layout of a particular room in their home or company department or a particular route they would take to work. Once they start groping into their visual memory for the answer, the eye balls will also jump into action.

## **Eye Language 2**

We all remember from our Physics lessons that the pupils will involuntarily contract or dilate in order to regulate the amount of light entering the eye. They will dilate in a dark room to absorb as much light rays as possible. This is exactly what happens when someone is being deceptive. As already mentioned, lying is a stressful activity and the brain is faced with additional strain when constructing a lie. Furthermore, the sympathetic nervous system is kicked into action, boosting the secretion of adrenaline in the blood stream. Adrenaline prepares the body for the stressful situation by enlarging the pupils. So, when you notice that someone's pupils are growing in size when they are answering your question, you can assume that they are in the process of devising the lie as they talk or trying to repeat the script of the original lie.

When telling a lie, the deceiver may widen their eyes and raise their eyebrows. The eyes become larger and the sclera or white outer layer of the eyeball becomes more noticeable. This is because they are rejoicing in their success for having deceived others. The wide eyes may also appear when the liar has been caught in the act of deception.

## **The Eye Blink Reflex**

Blinking is an involuntary eye movement that balances tear distribution, which nourishes and removes irritants from the surface of the eye and protects it from becoming dry. The average frequency at which the eye lids move is about 6-10 times per minute. The more stressed and afraid you are, the greater the tendency to blink. If someone started to blink more rapidly and frantically when they were speaking, it could mean that they were constructing a lie and finding the stress intolerable. As mentioned in a previous section of this book, frequent eye blinks may also occur if someone were attracted to you. In this case, the blinks would be accompanied by other flirtatious gestures like the hair touch or hair twirl.

## 23. HEAD MOVEMENTS THAT GIVE YOU AWAY

### The Head Bow

The head bow is a reaction of your brain to show that you are feeling guilty. You are feeling ashamed. It is very easily observed in children's behavior when they have done something wrong and want to admit guilt. They will lower their heads, glue their eyes to the floor and then wait to face the consequences of their wrongdoing. This is exactly what happens when empathy overcomes the liar and forces them to non-verbally say, "I am sorry." A child will ostentatiously bow his head until the chin touches the chest. This is because children are more authentic than adults. The adult, however, is more refined and the head bow will therefore be more subtle. The head bow also appears when someone is in the process of telling a lie and finds it unbearable to maintain eye contact. By bowing, they are able to literally pull their eyes away from the victim to the floor.

### The Head Tilt

People usually tilt their heads when listening. The intention is to expose one ear to the person who is speaking to them. This position allows for better penetration of the sound waves to the ear drum and therefore enhances understanding. However, if someone tilts their head when speaking, it might be a good indicator that a lie is about to emerge. They could be denying the truth or on the verge of inventing a lie. The head tilt is an eloquent reminder of their uncertainty or bewilderment. The conscientious brain is commanding the head to literally say, "I have no idea how to answer this compromising question or react to this particular statement. So I am now going into the process of making something up."

## **The head jerk**

The first head movement that can reveal a liar is a sudden head jerk backwards. It is obviously connected to the backing up body shift that I have already mentioned. It will often occur just after the liar has responded to a difficult or incriminating question and is afraid that the lie has been or will be decrypted.

## 24. HAND GESTURES THAT GIVE YOU AWAY

### Neck Touching

You may rightly believe that it may be very difficult to detect lies just based on a slight movement of the liar's head. So, let me move on to a gesture that occurs more frequently and is easier to perceive. It is called neck touching. The neck is a sensitive, defenseless part of the human body that requires protection when we find ourselves in stressful and threatening situations. Distortion of the truth is indeed a disturbing situation and the brain will force the liar's hand to move towards the neck and make placating or pacifying gestures. Men may grasp their neck in a more decisive way or perform a self-massage, whereas women are more inclined to be delicate. They will just use their fingers to gently cover the neck dimple.

I was once asked to interview a female sales representative who had already secured the job, but was performing inefficiently. Every time I asked her about the atmosphere in the department or her relationship with the other co-workers, she put her hand on her neck dimple before replying that everything was fine. At the same time, she flushed and averted her eyes. Unfortunately, every time she twisted the truth, she desperately tried to protect her poor, vulnerable throat. This made it easier for me to detect that she was trying to hide something. After she realized that I was far from being convinced, she admitted that the sales director was giving her a hard time and setting unachievable performance target.

When men are being deceptive or realize that they have been caught lying red handed, they may try to ventilate themselves by pulling the collar away from the neck or loosening their tie. By doing so, they yearn to lower their body temperature which suddenly rose due to the release of adrenaline. In other cases, the liar may simply scratch their neck a few times when feeding you with the lie. This is because the increase of blood flow in the dilated blood vessels will create an itching sensation. The

scratching may also occur during the process of constructing the lie.

## To Drink or Not To Drink

Lying is analogous to stressful circumstances and this will trigger the sympathetic nervous system into action. As a result, the production of saliva is inhibited and the mouth and throat of the liar become dry. Speaking becomes more and more difficult and steps will have to be taken to rectify the situation. In order to moisten the throat, they will try to swallow, causing the Adam's apple to move up and down. Their hand will also reach out more frequently for the glass of water, which they would gulp down to satisfy their thirst. The liar may also lick the sides of their lips to get rid of the dryness around them.

## Covering the Mouth

Covering the mouth is another body language sign that is very easy to spot. As this body signal has already been described in another section, I will not go too much into details. If you are a fan of political TV shows where people basically argue with each other, then the chances are that you have seen this gesture quite frequently. By covering their mouths people simply say, "I don't want to answer that question." They are literally covering their mouths, so they are covering the tool they are supposed to be using to answer the question, to communicate with others. They are non-verbally indicating that they will not give more information that may compromise them. Now, think about children's behavior when they reveal something they were not supposed to reveal. The instant they spill the beans you might see this comical gesture. It is as if they were trying to pull whatever they had said back into their mouths and at the same time trying to restrain more secret information from getting past the lips.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

In our fast-moving world of competition, we human beings will lie for a variety of reasons. We may do so to spare others, to avoid hurting their feelings and preserve the good atmosphere. In the majority of cases, however, people lie to preserve their good image because the way they are perceived by society is vitally important. They may sometimes go to the extremes to make this good impression an everlasting one. It is obvious that when we lie, we twist the verbal message that we send to our victims. Some people may fumble for the right words and spend too much time getting into unnecessary details. Others will try to change the topic or pretend they have misunderstood something or they may blame others. Regardless of how hard they try, their non-verbal language will reveal their true intentions. Even if you are not a specialist at detecting lies, your subconscious mind will do the job for you. It will pick up these signals and translate them on a level that you are not even aware of. However, the result of the translation will leave you with a strange feeling that something was wrong. Having completed this book, you will now be able to consciously detect these signals and unmask the liar.

Being a good communicator is not only about getting your message across or creating a good relationship with others. It is also about increasing your power of perceptiveness so that you are fully aware of what is going on around you. Once this happens, you will be able to control the events in your life and achieve success. This is surely a book that you would need to come back to after some time just to refresh your memory. I would suggest highlighting and revising sentences or even chapters that will have an impact on your life.

In order to make you assimilate and retain knowledge, I have illustrated this book with full-color photographs of myself and members of my family. I do hope that you have found it useful and interesting and have enjoyed the time spent with me. Now, it's time to go out there in the world

and test your communication skills.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Medical Doctor, Senior Director, Program Management  
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**Roy Naraine** graduated in the field of medicine in the year 1992. He has worked in various hospitals and outpatients' clinic. During the course of his studies, he became interested in the field of psychology. His profound knowledge of the function of the human brain allowed him to get better results when treating his patients.

For over twenty years he has been conducting self-improvement training, coaching sessions and counseling in international corporations. He has also worked as an interviewer in several companies and has been the personal adviser of many lucrative clients and company owners.

In addition, he possesses a graduate certificate in the field of project management. This knowledge, combined with his experience in the field

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His yearning to make his knowledge available to everyone has driven him towards online education. Together with members of eNar Studio, he is on his way to making this possible by launching sixteen online courses to date on Udemy platform.

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