

Soft Skills & Non-Verbal Communication

Corporate Body Language & Soft skills
A comprehensive guide

Agenda

- ➔ Introduction to Body Language
- ➔ The Science Behind Body Language
- ➔ Importance in Corporate Settings
- ➔ Key Elements of Positive Body Language
- ➔ Common Body Language Mistakes
- ➔ Verbal Communication Techniques
- ➔ Dress Code and Professional Appearance
- ➔ Job Interview-Specific Body Language
- ➔ Practice Scenarios and Role-Playing
- ➔ Dos and Don'ts Summary
- ➔ Q&A

What Is Body Language?

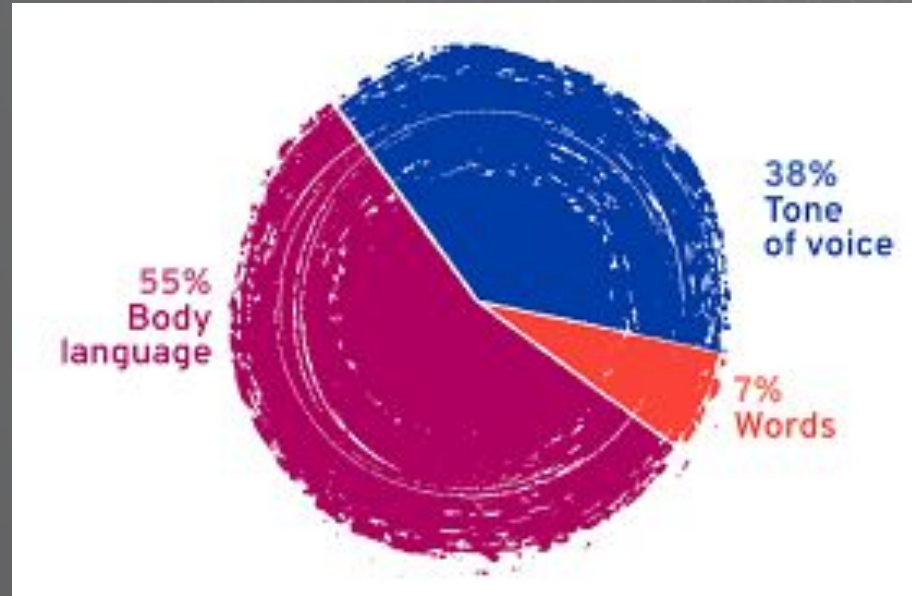
- ➔ Non-verbal communication through physical behaviors
- ➔ Includes facial expressions, body posture, gestures, eye movement, touch, and use of space

Types of Body Language

- ➔ **Facial Expressions:** Convey emotions (e.g., smile, frown, raised eyebrows)
- ➔ **Gestures:** Hand and arm movements that emphasize or illustrate speech
- ➔ **Posture:** The way you stand, sit, or carry yourself
- ➔ **Eye Contact:** Direction and duration of gaze
- ➔ **Touch:** Handshakes, pats on the back, etc.
- ➔ **Proxemics:** Use of space and distance between people

The 7-38-55 Rule (Mehrabian's study)

- ➔ 7% of meaning derived from verbal content
- ➔ 38% from tone of voice
- ➔ 55% from body language



Importance in Corporate Settings

First Impressions:

- Made within first 7 seconds of meeting someone
- Difficult to change once formed

Trust and Credibility:

- Consistent body language builds trust
- Inconsistencies between verbal and non-verbal cues can undermine credibility

Leadership and Influence:

- Leaders with strong body language are perceived as more charismatic
- Can enhance ability to motivate and persuade others

Importance in Corporate Settings Cont.

Building Rapport:

- Mirroring and matching body language can create connection
- Essential for networking and relationship-building

Cultural Intelligence:

- Understanding and adapting to different cultural norms of body language
- Crucial in global business environments

Key Elements of Positive Body Language

Eye Contact:

- Maintain appropriate eye contact (70–80% of the time)
- Practice the 50/70 rule: maintain eye contact 50% of the time while speaking, 70% while listening
- Use the "triangle technique": alternate between the eyes and forehead
- Benefits: Shows confidence, engagement, and trustworthiness

Posture:

- Stand and sit up straight with shoulders back
- Keep your chin parallel to the ground
- Distribute weight evenly on both feet when standing
- Sit slightly forward in your chair during interviews
- Benefits: Projects confidence, alertness, and professionalism

Key Elements of Positive Body Language

Cont.

Facial Expressions:

- Smile genuinely – engage the eyes
- Practice "neutral face" to avoid unintended negative expressions
- Show interest through raised eyebrows and nodding
- Match expressions to the tone of the conversation
- Benefits: Creates warmth, shows engagement, and builds connection

Hand Gestures:

- Use open, palms-up gestures to appear honest and open
- Use illustrators to emphasize points
- Avoid gestures like touching face, playing with hair, fidgeting
- Benefits: Enhances verbal messages, shows confidence and openness

Key Elements of Positive Body Language

Cont.

Proxemics (Use of Space):

- Understand and respect personal space (18–48 inches in most Western cultures)
- Position yourself at a 45-degree angle for less confrontational stance
- Use space dynamically in presentations (e.g., moving closer to engage audience)
- Benefits: Shows respect, creates comfort, and manages engagement

Voice and Paralanguage:

- Speak clearly and at a moderate pace
- Vary tone and pitch to maintain interest
- Use pauses effectively for emphasis
- Match the energy level of your conversation partner
- Benefits: Enhances clarity, shows confidence, and maintains engagement

Common Body Language Mistakes

Avoiding Eye Contact:

- Perceived as dishonest, insecure, or disinterested
- How to fix: Practice maintaining appropriate eye contact in daily conversations

Slouching or Poor Posture:

- Indicates lack of confidence or interest
- How to fix: Set reminders to check posture, strengthen core muscles

Crossing Arms:

- Appears defensive or closed off
- How to fix: Practice open postures, hold a notebook or pen if you need something to do with your hands

Fidgeting or Playing with Objects:

- Shows nervousness and lack of focus
- How to fix: Be aware of nervous habits, practice mindfulness techniques

Common Body Language Mistakes Cont.

Invading Personal Space:

- Makes others uncomfortable, shows lack of awareness
- How to fix: Be conscious of cultural norms, observe others' comfort levels

Weak Handshake:

- Perceived as lack of confidence or enthusiasm
- How to fix: Practice firm (but not overpowering) handshakes with friends/family

Excessive Nodding:

- Can appear overeager or insincere
- How to fix: Nod deliberately and less frequently, use other listening cues (e.g., verbal affirmations)

Mismatched Verbal and Non-verbal Cues:

- Creates distrust and confusion
- How to fix: Practice aligning your body language with your words, seek feedback from others

Verbal Communication Techniques

Clear and Concise Speech:

- Use simple language to explain complex ideas
- Avoid jargon unless you're sure the interviewer is familiar with it
- Practice the STAR method for answering behavioral questions

Active Listening:

- Give verbal and non-verbal cues that you're engaged
- Paraphrase key points to show understanding
- Ask clarifying questions when necessary

Tone and Pace:

- Speak at a moderate pace (about 150 words per minute)
- Use vocal variety to maintain interest
- Lower your pitch slightly for more authority

Verbal Communication Techniques Cont.

Avoiding Filler Words:

- Be aware of overusing words like "um," "uh," "like," "you know"
- Practice pausing instead of using fillers
- Record yourself speaking and note areas for improvement

Asking Thoughtful Questions:

- Prepare insightful questions about the role and company
- Use questions to demonstrate your knowledge and interest
- Listen carefully to answers and ask follow-up questions

Mirroring and Matching:

- Subtly match the interviewer's communication style
- Adapt your energy level to theirs
- Use similar language patterns (formal vs. casual)

Storytelling:

- Use anecdotes to illustrate your skills and experiences
- Keep stories concise and relevant
- Practice your key stories to ensure smooth delivery

Job Interview-Specific Body Language

Entrance:

- Walk confidently with good posture
- Smile and make eye contact with receptionist and interviewer
- Offer a firm handshake (when culturally appropriate)

Waiting Room Behavior:

- Sit up straight, appear calm and interested
- Avoid looking at your phone
- Be polite to everyone you encounter

Sitting:

- Sit up straight, lean slightly forward to show interest
- Keep feet planted on the ground
- Avoid crossing arms or legs

Job Interview-Specific Body Language

Listening:

- Maintain appropriate eye contact
- Nod occasionally and use facial expressions to show engagement
- Avoid interrupting or finishing the interviewer's sentences

Speaking:

- Use hand gestures naturally to emphasize points
- Maintain an open body position
- Modulate your voice to maintain interest

Handling Nervousness:

- Take deep breaths to calm nerves
- If hands shake, keep them folded in your lap
- Have a strategy for nervous habits (e.g., foot tapping)

Closing the Interview:

- Stand up smoothly, gather belongings calmly
- Thank the interviewer with a smile and eye contact
- Offer a firm handshake and maintain good posture until you've left the building

Dos:

- Maintain appropriate eye contact (70-80% of the time)
- Use open body language (uncrossed arms, palms visible)
- Smile genuinely and frequently
- Listen actively with engaged facial expressions
- Mirror the interviewer's energy and speaking pace
- Use natural hand gestures to emphasize points
- Sit up straight with a slight forward lean
- Offer a firm handshake (when culturally appropriate)
- Dress professionally and groom meticulously
- Practice your body language regularly

Don'ts:

- Avoid eye contact or stare intensely
- Fidget, play with objects, or display nervous tics
- Cross arms or legs (appears defensive)
- Invade the interviewer's personal space
- Use excessive or distracting hand movements
- Slouch or display low energy
- Check your phone or watch
- Dress inappropriately for the company culture
- Use closed or defensive body postures
- Forget to adjust your body language based on cultural context

Key Takeaways

- **Body language significantly impacts first impressions and interview success**
- **Non-verbal cues should align with and reinforce your verbal messages**
- **Practice positive body language daily to make it natural**
- **Be aware of and avoid common body language mistakes**
- **Tailor your appearance and behavior to the company culture**
- **Combine strong body language with clear, thoughtful verbal communication**
- **Use role-playing and feedback to improve your interview presence**
- **Remember that confident body language can actually boost your internal confidence**

What are soft skills?

- Soft skills, often referred to as interpersonal or people skills, are the non-technical abilities that enable us to interact harmoniously with others. These skills are not confined to a specific job or industry, making them universally valuable. They encompass a wide array of competencies, from effective communication and teamwork to adaptability, creativity, and problem-solving.

"The most effective way to improve your soft skills is through continuous learning and practice. Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone, for that's where true growth happens."

Different types of soft skills

- **Communication skills: The art of connection**
- **Presentation skills: Conveying clarity and impact**
- **Leadership and management: Guiding towards success**
- **Teamwork and collaboration: The power of cooperation**
- **Problem-solving and decision-making: Navigating challenges**

Additional to the skills mentioned soft skills also include:

- **Creativity:** The ability to think outside the box and generate novel ideas.
- **Critical thinking:** The capacity to evaluate information and make informed judgments.
- **Empathy:** The skill of understanding and relating to the emotions and perspectives of others.
- **Ethics:** Upholding moral principles and conducting oneself with integrity.
- **Motivation:** The drive to achieve goals and overcome challenges.
- **Negotiation skills:** The art of reaching agreements and resolving conflicts.
- **Organization skills:** The ability to manage time and resources efficiently.
- **Positive attitude:** Approaching situations with optimism and a constructive mindset.
- **Time management skills:** Effectively managing one's time and priorities.

Why soft skills presentation is important?



- Elevating employability: Your passport to dream opportunities
- Nurturing interpersonal relationships: building bridges, not walls
- Supercharging leadership abilities: Guiding the way to success
- Excelling in customer relations: The art of presentation

Conclusion

- Always learn new things
- Accept responsibility for yourself & your actions
- Look at problems & challenges
- Be grateful always
- Love yourself

Q&A Session





THANK YOU