Decoding deceptive body language

Two truths and a lie

When I was in fifth grade, I won an eating contest by eating five chicken-fried steaks.  
I used to volunteer at the Palo Alto VA Hospital to help them perform autopsies.  
When I lived in Australia I used to work night shifts as a bartender, as a professional mover as well.  
I dropped bakery school to come to Stanford.

One of us is lying, and we hope by the end of our presentation you have a better idea of who that was.  
Today we are going to make you into the best **Two Truths and a Lie(1)** players that GSB has ever seen.  
Because today, we're here to talk to you about the body language of deception.  
We're going to be drawing heavily on research by body language expert Carol Goman.  
And with this knowledge, you should be able to spot liars in games, in interviews, in negotiations, and even presentations.  
We communicate a lot with our bodies.  
We learned earlier in the quarter that **over half of the total impact(2)** of a message is communicated non-verbally.  
The same is true with lying.  
So nonverbals can be important and reliable tells.  
In our presentation today we're going to start from the top and work down, detailing common cues of deception.  
We're going to start with the face, move to the hands, and end with the feet.

Have you ever thought of wearing sunglasses for a business meeting?  
For a tough negotiation?  
For a date?  
Probably not.  
That will sound weird.  
However, sorry.  
However, some people do it.  
Poker players do it.  
Why do they do it?  
Because they didn't go to Stanford?  
No.  
They do it because **they know that your eyes talk more than you want them to do.(3)**  
One thing, the pupils.  
**The pupils** **are directly wired to your brain.(4)**  
And because that directly wired to your brain, there's not much you can do about it.  
When you're excited, they're going to dilate.  
If you dissimilate, not interested, they're going to retract.  
Poker players don’t want you to see their hands through their eyes.  
There's other ways by which you can deceive through your eyes.  
When you dissimilate typically, your eyes gonna start **blinking frenetically.(5)**  
Much faster than they usually do.  
Or you're gonna avoid eye contact altogether.  
Police know these cues very well.  
Luckily for you, in Silicon Valley, and the US generally, when you go to work, people don't wear sunglasses, even though in California you never know.  
Another way where you can read people's mind, through the face.  
Because you're a good mammal, you know the expressions of the six major emotions.  
Smiling associated with happiness, sadness, anger, disgust, but the problem is everybody knows that.  
They're universal, so people are gonna try to fake it.  
Let me give you two advice, two hints on how to detect it.  
The first one is the emotion shows first on the face.  
The first thing that's gonna come.  
If your emotion comes at the same time as you speak, then it is a dissimulation.  
It's fake.  
So second one is an emotion actually lasts **less than a second**.(6)  
So any manifestation, demonstration of this emotion, if it lasts more than one second, you're probably faking it as well.  
One last thing, it's on your tongue.  
In a recent poll by a great newspaper, **4% of Americans say that they believe that lizard people were among the US and were trying to take over the US government.(7)**  
I cannot comment on the veracity of that, but I can give you two things.  
First, being called lizard is not a compliment on your honesty.  
Second is your tongue is gonna start under pressure to flick phonetically.  
And that short gif John Kerry in a 90 seconds testimony flicks his tongue like a snake eight times.  
I'll let you make up your mind about what he says, but I'll tell you one thing, keep your tongue in.  
Looking at the eyes and the face, is that an actor?  
You also wanna pay attention to the hands and the gestures.  
In particular, you wanna pay attention to three things.  
The first is where the hands are going.  
When we lie, we tend to do movements with our hands that we wouldn't otherwise.  
Some of these include, **covering your mouth(8)**, as if the brain was telling the body, you're lying, you might get caught, and there's consequences.  
So cover yourself.  
The second is we **scratch our nose**.(9)  
And we do that because we release more adrenaline when we're nervous, when we're lying and therefore our skin becomes itchy.  
We also tend to rub our neck or our ear in a reassuring reflex that we have had since we were little kids.  
The second part is timing.  
Just as Rodolphe mentioned with the facial expressions, with gestures, timing is also of the essence.  
Every time we speak and we're gesturing at the same time, we **always gesture first and then say the words.(10)**  
But when we lie, we usually say the words first and then do the gesture.  
In this video, hopefully you'll be able to see the differences.  
And see how whenever .

But I wanna say one thing to the American people.  
I want you to listen to me.  
I'm gonna say this again.  
I did not have sexual relations with that woman.  
Miss Lew-

Do you believe him?  
Even if you didn't know, if you didn't know that he was lying, you would be able to tell that something's off.  
There's a difference between "I did not" and "I did not."  
Hopefully by now you'll be able to tell that that difference usually implies that someone is not being completely honest.  
The third thing to look for is the **positioning of the palms.(11)**  
Will you believe me more if I'm talking to you like this, or if I'm talking to you like this?  
Our palms are a part of our body that we use to connect with other people a lot.  
That's why we handshake, that's why we wave whenever we greet people.  
Therefore, whenever someone is lying, it's very hard to do so with **their palms exposed**.(12)  
So, what we do is we either put them in our pockets, or just put them, facing down, or we put them behind an object that may be in between us and the people that we're lying to, such as a desk.  
Gesturing is the most primitive way of communication that humans have.  
And for that reason, we tend to do the movements instantaneously.  
Even when we can rehearse the words that we say when we lie, the gestures have a mind of their own.  
So they're more involuntary.  
By now, hopefully you'll be able to see that if you pay attention to where the hands go, the timing of the movement and also, where the palms are facing.  
We'd say a lot without saying nothing.

Well, Daniel just showed us the importance of looking at the hand gestures to detect lies.  
And Rodolphe had mentioned the facial expression.  
Joe Navarro who's been an FBI behavioural analyst for the past 20 years and author of What Everybody Is Saying, claims that the most honest part of our body is actually **our feet**.(13)  
And this is because when we try to control our body we focus on our facial expressions and our hands but we often don't rehearse our feet.  
So there's really four main things that you should look out for with the feet.  
The first is how you stand.  
So I'm standing here with my weight equally distributed between both my legs.  
This shows that I'm much more comfortable about what I'm saying.  
And I'm taking a firm stand on the subject, but if I were to cross my legs, this is a much more closed and defensive position.  
I'm much more uncomfortable about what I'm saying and I'm likely to be more nervous about it.  
And I were to **shift my weight from side to side**.(14)  
Or rock back and forth.  
This is a sign that I'm trying to calm myself.  
And again, I'm likely nervous about what I'm saying to you.  
The second thing to look out for, is how often the feet are moving.  
So, if I'm fidgeting my feet, if I'm tapping them, if I'm winding them around things.  
It's likely another sign that I'm uncomfortable with what I'm saying to you.  
The third thing to look out for is the direction of where my feet are pointing.  
This is an indication of my interest level and my liking towards the person that I'm talking to.  
So if we were to have a conversation and my feet were pointing toward the door but my torso is still pointed towards you, it likely means that I wanna exit this conversation because I'm not interested in talking to you.  
[LAUGH] And the fourth and final thing to look out for is this concept of **ankle locking(15)** and this is where one ankle crosses the other.  
And this is a sign that somebody is likely withholding information from you.  
For example, in therapy sessions, a lot of patients will lock their ankles as they're withholding their emotions.  
And in negotiations, if the person across from the table from you is locking their ankles, it likely means that they're withholding valuable concessions.  
So for all these reasons, remember that one of the most honest, non-verbal communicators are actually your feet.  
So take a glance down at somebody's feet when you're talking to them.  
And look out for the four signs of lying.  
Unbalanced stance, lot of feet movement, the feet pointing away from you, and ankle locking.  
So at this point we've really picked apart the nonverbals of deception.  
We've talked to you about the face, we've talked to you about the hands, and we've talked to you about the feet.  
Just to bring it back together, it's important to remember to view behaviours in clusters.  
So look **for at least three signs(16)** of lying before calling foul.  
And if you can, think about the context of what's normal for the individual that you're observing.  
Now, we don't condone lying per se, but we would encourage you to use this knowledge, not only for others, but for yourself.  
So the next time you're at the World Series of Poker, don't forget your sunglasses to cover up those dilated pupils.  
Or if that's not in the cards, consider your next tough negotiation, or interview situation.  
We'd love now to turn to questions, would love to hear anything that you would like to ask us, but first we want to answer what might be the most burning question in the room.  
Who was lying?

MCQs

**1.The presenters mention that their goal is to make the audience better at which game?**

* A) Poker
* B) Two Truths and a Lie
* C) Charades
* D) Truth or Dare  
  **Answer**: B) Two Truths and a Lie

**2.What percentage of the impact of a message is communicated non-verbally, according to the presenters?**

* A) Over half
* B) About a quarter
* C) 80%
* D) Less than half  
  **Answer**: A) Over half

**3.What is the primary reason poker players wear sunglasses?**

* a) To hide their expressions
* b) To avoid being recognized
* c) because they know that your eyes talk more than you want them to do.
* d) To block out light

**Answer**: c) because they know that your eyes talk more than you want them to do.

**4.What are the pupils said to be “directly wired” to?**

* A) The heart
* B) The emotions
* C) The brain
* D) The nervous system  
  **Answer**: C) The brain

**5.What behavior is typical of people who are lying, according to the discussion of eye movement?**

* A) Consistent eye contact
* B) Blinking less frequently
* C) Frenetic blinking
* D) Looking at the floor  
  **Answer**: C) Frenetic blinking

**6.How long do genuine emotions usually last on a person's face?**

* A) More than 5 seconds
* B) 2–3 seconds
* C) Less than 1 second
* D) 1–2 minutes  
  **Answer**: C) Less than 1 second

**7.What did a recent poll reveal, according to the transcript?**

* A) 4% of Americans believe in UFOs
* B)4% of Americans say that they believe that lizard people were among the US and were trying to take over the US government.
* C) 10% of Americans think the moon landing was faked
* D) 20% of Americans distrust political figures  
  **Answer**: B) 4% of Americans say that they believe that lizard people were among the US and were trying to take over the US government.

**8.What is a common hand movement associated with lying?**

* A) Waving hands rapidly
* B) Gesturing with open palms
* C) Covering the mouth
* D) Tapping fingers  
  **Answer**: C) Covering the mouth

**9.What is a physical sign of nervousness that can indicate lying, as mentioned in relation to hand gestures?**

* A) Clenching fists
* B) Rubbing the nose
* C) Crossing arms
* D) Touching the forehead  
  **Answer**: B) Rubbing the nose

**10. According to the transcript, when do people gesture first before speaking?**

* A) When they are calm
* B) When they are lying
* C) When they are speaking naturally
* D) When they are in an argument  
  **Answer**: C) When they are speaking naturally

**11. Which body part's position can signal whether someone is lying?**

* A) Shoulders
* B) Palms
* C) Neck
* D) Forehead  
  **Answer**: B) Palms

**12. What gesture is hard to do when lying, according to the transcript?**

* A) Folding arms
* B) Clenching fists
* C) Exposing palms
* D) Crossing legs  
  **Answer**: C) Exposing palms

**13. What is the hardest body part to rehearse and control when lying, according to Joe Navarro?**

* A) Hands
* B) Facial expressions
* C) Feet
* D) Shoulders  
  **Answer**: C) Feet

**14. Which foot position suggests discomfort or nervousness?**

* A) Feet pointing forward
* B) weight shifting side to side
* C) Feet firmly planted
* D) Feet slightly raised  
  **Answer**: B) weight shifting side to side

**15. What is a sign of withholding information or emotions in negotiations?**

* A) Feet tapping
* B) Ankle locking
* C) Leaning forward
* D) Crossing arms  
  **Answer**: B) Ankle locking

**16. Which of the following is a reliable method for detecting deception through body language?**

a) Looking for one specific cue

b) Observing clusters of at least three non-verbal behaviors

c) Focusing only on the face

d) Ignoring hand movements

**Answer**: b) Observing clusters of at least three non-verbal behaviors

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