To: Engineering Communications

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Date: Nov 21, 2017

Subject: Non-Verbal Communication Video Series C - Professional Development

The human subconscious is a complicated system which average people find hard to interact with. Cognitive dissonance is the phenomena humans go through when they find themselves faced with two conflicting attitudes, beliefs or behaviors. The human brain tends to try to only believe in one of two conflicting ideas at once. The human subconscious can tell the difference between what is being said verbally versus what is being said through a mode of communication like body language. If a person feels weak, they will show weak body language. If a speaker wants to be successful they must put forth a strong body language. This is where a cognitive dissonance develops. If a speaker is used to displaying a weak body language, their brain will feel burdened by the extra task of trying to display strong body language. People studying body language gave students a self-evaluation form to fill out, they found that posture of people affected the outcome of the self-evaluation. People with good posture and strong body language evaluated themselves higher.

Body language communicates in ways that are hard to study compared to verbal communication. Judgements made using a person’s body language are more subjective and seemingly innate. How a person makes these judgements shape who they will be in the future. Showing control over body language can be a significant aid to a person’s career and life in general. Non-verbal expressions of power and dominance have been with humans since before there were humans. In the animal world, actions like spreading your body out, tensing certain muscles, and closing the body are all used in survival and procreation. The similarities between human non-verbal communication and animal non-verbal communication explain why concepts like empathy exist between species. On a hormonal level, variations in the way people express themselves through their body leads to large variations in certain hormones like cortisol and testosterone. The phrase “Fake it until you make it” might be based on this result people see when they fake certain postures and non-verbal communication as much as it is based on verbal communication.