

Actions Speak Louder than Words

Are you aware of everything you are saying to your interviewer? Yes, you have spent hours preparing and researching the company, and the interview has gone very well. But has your body language altered the interviewer's opinion of you, and changed the outcome of the interview?

Most people don't consider their body language when preparing for an interview, but it is a powerful form of communication that is capable of leaving a lasting-and damaging-impression. Here are some of the signals that you could be sending, and suggestions for improving your overall impression.

The Greeting- Studies show that the impression you give in the first minutes of meeting someone is the most important, so it is crucial that your greeting exudes confidence and friendliness. Your handshake should be firm and friendly. The interviewer should initiate the handshake, and you should reciprocate, smiling warmly and maintaining good eye contact. You should extend your hand vertically-shaking hands with your palm up signals submissiveness; extending your hand palm down says that you wish to dominate the situation.

Listening- Most people look forward to doing the listening. However, not talking does not mean not saying the wrong thing-in fact, this is when you can send some of the most negative messages. While the interviewer is talking, she is watching you, particularly your face, for telltale signs. Do you appear tense? Uninterested? Untrustworthy? Impatient?

How to Send a Bad Vibe

Chewing on lip, touching your mouth-Suggests indecisiveness, weakness

Downturned or tensely held mouth-Is uninterested, irritated, or deals poorly with stress.

Mindlessly grinning throughout the interview-insincere, unintelligent, and perhaps unstable.

Shifty or Wandering Eyes-Untrustworthy, uninterested, disrespectful.

Staring-Aggressive, combative

Furrowed brows/Frowning-Tense, Easily stressed.

Rapidly Nodding Head-Conveys impatience.

Fidgety hands/Wringing of Hands-Indecision, nervousness

Drumming Fingers or Pens-Impatient, uninterested

Slouching in Chair -Unprofessional, overconfident

Clenched Jaw-Tense Facial Muscles-Stressed, irritable.

The Moves that Get the Job

Upturned mouth, that naturally breaks into a smile when appropriate-Suggests confidence, friendliness, sincerity.

Relaxed, natural facial muscles-Shows that you are at ease and confident even in this stressful situation.

Nodding slowly at the appropriate moments notes interest in what the interviewer is saying.

Raising eyebrows-upon greeting, and when appropriate throughout the interview-shows that you are interested and at ease.

Good Eye Contact-Suggests that you are confident and honest. Good eye contact does not mean staring the interviewer down. You don't want to look away while they are talking, but you do want to break direct eye contact by drawing a triangle with your eyes, down to the interviewer's mouth, back to his eyes. Focusing on the bridge of someone's nose is also a good way to maintain good eye contact without giving the impression that you are staring.

Hands open, palms up, and relaxed in your lap-Exudes openness, honesty, and dependability.

Sitting comfortably with your lower back resting in the back of the chair, but leaning slightly forward-Shows interest and friendliness.

The best way to take a look at your body language is to practice in the mirror. Once you know what your tendencies are, you will be aware of what you need to be aware of during the interview. Being at ease is important in conveying your best self, so try to relax, remember just how well you have prepared yourself, and go for it!