



POWERFUL BODY LANGUAGE FOR ADVOCATES

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Body Language

- **Powerful form of nonverbal communication that we typically express and interpret without thinking twice**
- **Influences how others think and feel about you**
 - **55% of communication is body language, 38% is the tone of voice (presentation), and 7% is the actual words spoken**
- **Influences how we think and feel about ourselves**
 - **Affects thoughts, feelings, physiology**
 - **Smile when you are happy – smile to make yourself happy**
- **Nonverbal cues display power**
 - **Powerful = Expand**
 - **Powerless = Shrink**



Body Language Self Reflection Exercise

Take note of how you are sitting. Don't shift or adjust!

- What are your head, neck, and shoulders doing?
- How is your torso positioned?
- Where are your legs, knees, ankles, and feet?
- Are you expanding or contracting?
- How do you feel in this position?
- What connection is there between your body language and how you feel?
- Are you posed in the way you typically hold yourself?



The Most Crucial Aspects of Body Language: *Posture*, Eye Contact & Personal Space

- The way you feel affects your body
 - Insecure or Depressed: Round your shoulders, slump, look down
 - Upbeat & Assured: Stand erect, Chest expanded
- Posture can have powerful effect on how you feel and how others perceive you
 - Slouching or arms crossed doesn't always mean someone feels irritated or fearful.
 - Regardless, people read body language cues and react accordingly
 - Be aware of how you carry yourself to avoid giving the wrong impression.



Note: this is from a western perspective, does not apply to all cultures.

The Most Crucial Aspects of Body Language: Posture, *Eye Contact* & Personal Space



- Fastest way to build a personal connection
- Shows you're paying attention, helps you read facial expressions, makes you appear and feel more confident
- Doesn't come naturally to everyone
- Poor eye contact: relays insecurity, boredom or lack of self-confidence (even if you don't feel that way)
- Avoid frazzled glances, looking everywhere but at the person you are speaking to

- **To improve your eye contact skills:**
 - **Focus at the spot in between the other person's eyes**
 - **Hold eye contact for 4-5 seconds, look away, repeat; don't hold it too long – creepy or intimidating**
 - **Eye contact is easier when you are listening; it's ok to look away more frequently while speaking**

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The Most Crucial Aspects of Body Language: Posture, Eye Contact & *Personal Space*

- Simple yet critical part of body language.
- Roughly a 4-foot radius around someone, though it can vary
 - Typically, only family and close friends step within this area
- Stand around 4 to 8 feet away as you converse with others
- Too close: may lead to the other person feeling uncomfortable or threatened; may not register your words due to discomfort.
 - If they are: looking away, speaking in short bursts, or backing away, you might be too close.
- The reverse applies as well:
 - Usually you close the gap as the conversation continues
 - If you grow the gap, you will make them uncomfortable or feel like they have done something wrong.



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Powerful Body Language Tips

1. To improve your memory, uncross your arms and legs (do it now!)
2. To connect instantly with someone, shake hands

Studies show:

- People are two times more likely to remember you if you shake hands with them.
- People react to those with whom they shake hands by being more open and friendly.

To create an equal feeling:

- Approach, make eye contact, smile, to let the other person know a handshake is on its way.
- Make sure there are no barriers, stand up if you are sitting down.
- Extend your right hand at least halfway into the shared space.
- Use a vertical palm, indicates you are equals. Palm up, submission, other person should take charge. Palm down, authoritative, takes the lead, could be seen as controlling.
- Decide on firmness of grip. Increase or decrease pressure to complement recipient's hand.
- 5 to 7 hand pumps are acceptable. Too many – eager and destructive. Too few – not really enjoying the handshake.



Powerful Body Language Tips

3. To increase participation, look like you're listening
4. To encourage collaboration, remove barriers
5. To stimulate good feelings, smile
6. To show agreement, mirror expressions and postures
7. To improve your speech, use your hands
8. To learn the truth, watch people's feet
9. To sound authoritative, keep your voice down



Powerful Body Language Tips

10. To boost your confidence, assume a power pose!

- We can measure physiological differences in powerful people
- You can change your mind-set using your body
- Power posing is effective in high-stakes situations
- Fake it until you become it



Power Posing

Power posing offers an effective tactic for boosting your confidence in preparation for a high-stakes situation.

Note: using power poses in actual interactions is not effective, as it can be unnecessarily domineering. In interactions, adopt open, good postures that signals both confidence and engagement.

- **Wonder Woman:** Stand with your hands on your hips and your feet shoulder width apart.
- **V for Victory:** Stand with your feet shoulder width apart and stretch your arms out into a V, as if you just crossed the finish line at a race.
- **The President:** Recline in your chair with your hands clasped behind your head. Prop your feet up or spread your knees wide to take up space.
- **The CEO:** Stand at the head of the table with your feet spread wide. Lean over and place your hands on the table, keeping your chest pointing forward and your head held high.

Now, Pose!

- Which pose did you like best?
- How do you feel after trying out your favorite power pose?
- How has your body changed after holding the power pose in comparison with the body audit?



Now get out there and do (advocacy) work!

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