

**KASIA WEZOWSKI
AND PATRYK WEZOWSKI**

**WITHOUT
SAYING A
WORD**

**MASTER THE
SCIENCE OF
BODY LANGUAGE
& MAXIMIZE
YOUR SUCCESS**



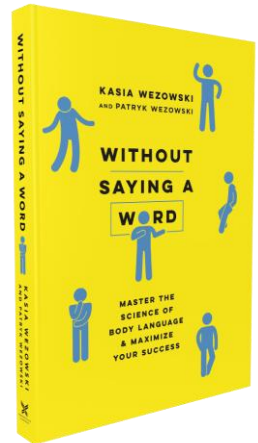
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WITHOUT SAYING A WORD

Master the Science of Body Language
and Maximize Your Success



KASIA WEZOWSKI
AND
PATRYK WEZOWSKI



HARPERCOLLINS
LEADERSHIP

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Introduction



Your Body Language Intelligence Determines Your Success

Several years ago, Patryk and I were invited to predict the results of a startup pitch contest in Vienna, where 2,500 tech entrepreneurs were competing. We observed the presentations, but rather than paying attention to the ideas the entrepreneurs pitched, we watched the body language and microexpressions of the judges as they listened. We gave our predictions of who would win before the winners were announced; as we and the audience soon learned, we were spot on. We had spoiled the surprise.

Two years later we were invited back to the same event. This time, instead of watching the judges, we observed the contestants. Our task was not to guess the winners, but to determine

how presenters' nonverbal communication contributed to their success or failure.

We evaluated each would-be entrepreneur on a scale from 0 to 15. People scored points for each sign of positive, confident body language, such as smiling, maintaining eye contact, and persuasive gesturing. They lost points for each negative signal, such as fidgeting, stiff hand movements, and averted eyes.

We found that contestants whose pitches were rated in the top eight by competition judges scored an average of 8.3 on our fifteen-point scale, while those who did not place in that top tier had an average score of 5.5. Positive body language strongly correlated with more successful outcomes.

We've found similar correlations in the political realm. Let's look at the last two U.S. presidential elections.

During the 2012 campaign, we conducted an online study in which a thousand participants—both Democrats and Republicans—watched two-minute video clips featuring Barack Obama and Mitt Romney at campaign events delivering both neutral and emotional content.

Webcams recorded the viewers' facial expressions, and our team analyzed them for six key emotional responses identified in psychology research: happy, surprised, afraid, disgusted, angry, and sad. We coded for the tenor of the emotion (positive or negative) and how strongly it seemed to be expressed. This analysis showed that Obama sparked stronger emotional responses and fewer negative ones. Even a significant number of Republicans—16 percent—reacted negatively to Romney.

When we analyzed the candidates' body language, we found that Obama's resembled those of our pitch contest winners. He displayed primarily open, positive, confident positions congruent

with his speech. Romney, by contrast, often gave out negative signals, diminishing his message with contradictory and distracting facial expressions and movement.

The 2016 presidential election also revealed a stark contrast between the body language of the two candidates, which was noticeable throughout the debates. While Obama was able to gain an advantage over Romney in part because of his more convincing nonverbal communication, in the 2016 election neither Clinton nor Trump was able to use body language to create a positive impression.

Trump's hypermasculine behavior and his disconcerting habit of following Clinton on stage as she talked was highly off-putting to many viewers and voters. Clinton was more controlled than Trump, but perhaps too much so. She was widely seen as inauthentic; her studied mannerisms, in fact, made it harder for the audience to connect with her.

Neither Clinton nor Trump's debate performance was bad enough to alienate their core audiences. A large number of people responded well to Clinton's composure; likewise, other people liked Trump's brash swagger. However, if one of the candidates had been able to behave a bit more like Obama and form an authentic connection with voters outside their normal base, it may have improved their chances by widening their appeal.

Of course, the elections didn't hinge on body language! Nor did the results of the startup competition. But the right kinds of non-verbal communication do correlate with success.

Great Communicators Read Body Language

Although most of us like to think of ourselves as rational decisionmakers, ample research shows that emotions play an outsized role in sales and negotiations. If you can't read what your counterpart is feeling and instead focus only on what she is saying, you're highly unlikely to achieve everything you could have.

Of course, experienced negotiators know how to mask their true feelings. They choose their words, tone, body language, and expressions carefully. To the average observer, they often appear neutral, impassive. Or they're able to convincingly fake an emotion if they think it will help them advance their own interests.

However, there is a way to read what your counterpart is feeling even if they are deliberately trying to hide it from you. The secret is to pay attention to the spontaneous and involuntary microexpressions that rapidly flit across everyone's faces at times of intense emotion. If you know what to look for, microexpressions can provide an instant, honest window into how your counterpart is feeling.

In our work in body language research and instruction, we've long theorized that one of the key differences between exceptional negotiators or salespeople and those who are merely average is the ability to read these microexpressions. This enables them to gauge visceral reactions to ideas or proposals, and then strategically steer the other person toward a preferred outcome.

To test this idea, we conducted two experiments using videos that measure users' ability to recognize these expressions.

In the first study, we compared the video test scores of salespeople from the Myo Company with their performances and found that those with above-average scores noticeably outsold

their colleagues. The second experiment involved salespeople from a BMW showroom in Rome, Italy. We found that high performers (who had sold more than sixty automobiles in the most recent quarter) scored almost twice as high on the test as low performers. Our conclusion: Effective negotiators seem to be naturally good at reading microexpressions.

Anyone Can Increase Their Body Language Intelligence

Body language intelligence is closely correlated with professional success and general happiness. Projecting confident, trustworthy body language enhances the impact of your presentations. The ability to read body language and microexpressions increases your skill as a negotiator and salesperson. Studying body language increases your *emotional intelligence*, which enhances the quality of all of your relationships.

Some people are born with a natural gift for body language, but anyone can learn to increase their body language intelligence through study and practice.

Six years ago, we were asked to develop a training course for call centers. The participants in the course only had contact with their customers by telephone. You might think that the call center operatives could best learn to interact better with customers by learning the right set of “formulas”: how to deliver the appropriate sales pitch in the appropriate manner to land bigger orders or to soothe difficult clients.

After a number of the course participants gave a demonstration of how they handle their telephone conversations, we told

them that our training would not focus on learning set formulas or on correct voice intonation. Instead, we wanted them to concentrate on the body language of the people giving the demonstrations. In particular, we asked what they could deduce from the posture and attitude of these demonstrators. It soon became clear that body language could have a major influence on the resulting conversations.

One of the participants sat in a very uncomfortable position and had a furrowed brow while she talked to customers. As a result, she sounded irritated. Another leaned back in his chair with his legs wide open. His face had a superior look, which was reflected by the arrogant tone in his voice. This made his conversation partner—the customer on the other end of the line—less willing to answer his questions.

A third participant was hunched up in a posture that betrayed insecurity—which was plain to hear in the way she spoke. A fourth person flicked through his manual of sales formulas while conducting his conversation. He sounded distracted and failed to concentrate on what he was saying and hearing, which made his conversation partner feel ignored and unimportant.

What is striking about these different approaches is that all the participants were following exactly the same conversation plan and speaking exactly the same words, which they had all learned by heart. However, their body language had a big impact on the way they actually spoke, which in turn had a big impact on the way their conversation partners experienced hearing them.

We realized from these observations that it was more important for us to concentrate on body language and on changing the participants' work posture/attitude, than on trying to alter their voices or the content of the words. It also soon became

clear that some of the trainees were transferring their own bad moods to the people they were talking to. This negative approach may have been carried over from the way they felt at home, or it may have been the result of some personal conviction, or it may simply have been caused by something that had irritated the participant earlier in the day. Whatever the reason, their body language during their telephone conversations with their customers spoke volumes about what they were really feeling inside. Just as crucially, their nonverbal behavior had a powerful influence on their customers, who in turn became nervous, irritated, or arrogant. This confirmed what we already knew: Body language shows what is happening inside your body and mind. If you want to change that body language, the only way to do it is to start with your own emotions and moods.

“ Your body always wants
to tell the truth about what you
are feeling. ”

THE TRUTH ABOUT BODY LANGUAGE

A good knowledge of body language helps you to be more aware of what someone else is really feeling. It is therefore the ideal compass for every conversation. The nonverbal signals that we transmit with our bodies are the signposts that can lead us along the right road to successful communication. However, an understanding of body language alone cannot change the underlying emotions it reflects.

WITHOUT SAYING A WORD

Body language is a kind of stethoscope: It helps you to examine the possible causes of certain types of behavior from the outside. However, it cannot change what is happening on the inside without help.

When you are aware of certain emotions, it becomes easier to focus on them and transform them. But trying to adjust your body language without changing something inside is counterproductive. The nonverbal signals you send out are not controllable: Your body will always want to tell the truth about what you are feeling.

Take, for example, someone who is nervous before giving a presentation. Even though she tries hard to adopt all the self-confident attitudes and poses outlined in Chapter 3, if she does not feel genuinely calm inside there will always be something that escapes her attention or comes across to others as fake. Changing your body language without thinking about your underlying emotions is pointless. Body language allows us to quickly and accurately identify our internal emotions and their influence on our behavior. These internal emotions need to be transformed before we can expect to see any external improvement in our body language. The tips and exercises in this book make this change possible—almost overnight.

Changing Your Body Language

The training for the call center operatives began with relaxation exercises to help improve their general mood. Many participants took our advice to participate in sports between training

sessions and to devote more time to things they liked doing. One of them began coming to work on his motorcycle. Another went swimming two or three times a week. Some decided to spend more quality time with their families. Others got into meditation or mindfulness.

The aim was to relax the tension in their muscles, since that tension made their voices sound stiff and cool when speaking on the phone. A secondary objective was to make them aware that their work took up the largest part of their day so it was worth making an effort to make that work more pleasant, regardless of whether they did the job because they liked it or because it was just a way to pay the bills. Instead of being irritated and frustrated for forty hours a week, impatiently waiting for the weekend to come, surely it was better to feel relaxed at work, laughing with your colleagues, and showing more understanding for your customers? This was the core of our message.

Each group had six days of training divided into three cycles. We also worked on the participants' verbal communication, but we always related it to a conscious awareness of their body language. This not only gave participants greater insight into the best strategies to use with their customers, but also gave them a more positive attitude toward their work. One of the company directors commented afterward that it was almost like getting a completely new set of employees, so great was the change in their voices and their styles of communication.

All the transformations were realized at the level of the participants' body language, which promoted better contact with their customers. Why? Because your body language expresses your emotions, and this language is more important than the language of mere words. People not only react to what you say,

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but to what you do and the way you do it. In other words, to your body language.

BODY LANGUAGE EXPERTS AND MARITAL SECRETS

Participants in our courses often ask if it's difficult for two body language experts to be married to each other. Is it irritating to see what the other is thinking or feeling without even saying a word?

The short answer is no. We have no secrets from each other and feel the need for none. We both believe that authenticity and honesty are the best approach to any relationship. We regard it as a kind of added value that we are so quickly able to assess each other's feelings. This results in a tighter bond, fewer misunderstandings, greater trust, and more empathy for each other. Body language deepens friendships and relationships. The only difficult thing is that we sometimes find it hard to surprise each other: Body language never lies.

What's more, body language can accelerate the "getting-to-know-you" process at the beginning of a relationship. A sharp and intuitive sense for body language signals can help you to feel whether or not someone might be a suitable partner. Over the years we have lost many "friends" as a result of our expertise in nonverbal communication. But the friends we have retained are true and genuine friends, on whom we know we can rely.

After you have read this book, you may come to the conclusion that your partner is no longer as crazy about you as you once thought, or that your boss will never give that

promotion you so desperately want, or that your best friend is clearly keeping something hidden from you. If that's the way things are, so be it. We have never seen the value of prolonging an artificial relationship any longer than is necessary. Open, honest, and transparent communication is always the best policy. In the long term, this is the only way to ensure that a marriage is a happy one. So, are you ready to start your own personal journey to authenticity? Because once you have read this book, there will be no turning back.

How Scientifically Valid Are Interpretations of Body Language?

There has been a long dispute between those who claim that the interpretation of body language is grounded in science and those who argue that it is unscientific. We would like to use the following example to clarify our position: What is yawning? For many years, it was thought that the purpose of yawning was to bring more air into the body when it was in short supply. However, in 2002 Mark A. W. Andrews published a paper in which he argued that this theory was incorrect, since the lungs are not independently capable of recognizing a lower level of oxygen in the bodily system. In 2007, Andrew C. Gallup and Gordon G. Gallup investigated whether or not yawning might serve to lower the temperature of the brain. At the International Conference on Yawning it was announced that yawning is an expression of arousal. Since then, several other researchers have given different explanations. In other words, even an easily identifiable and seemingly simple bodily action like yawning has no universally accepted interpretation.

Similarly, correct interpretation of body language is primarily dependent on knowledge of and your experience with the phenomenon. Our interpretations are based on the most current scientific studies. But the science of body language is living science: Every day new and fascinating discoveries are being made about the way the human body works. As you will see, some interpretations are culture dependent. Other aspects are driven by human evolution, and therefore learned by us all from an early age, or else are observable in a similar form in nature.

The focus of this book is to provide straightforward, clear, and usable guidelines to people who want to apply the science of nonverbal communication in everyday conversations. The book should also satisfy those who prefer to see the scientific evidence on which our guidelines are based, particularly in the sections dealing with microexpressions, the eyes, and the smile. For further study, you can also check our source material using the bibliography at the end of the book.

**“ How can I apply the science
of body language in my everyday
conversations? ”**

According to the British biologist Desmond Morris, people communicate with more than 3,000 different gestures. The gestures that are discussed in the following pages are mainly those found in business conversations and are relatively easy to interpret. More complex emotional experiences, such as shyness or

pain, require greater expertise to interpret, and are beyond the scope of this book. Shyness and pain can be displayed by more than ten different signals or combination of signals. At the same time, it is very difficult to distinguish between a real and a pretended experience of these sensations.

In much the same way, we chose not to discuss in detail the signals that cause the most controversy among scientists (for example, whether or not a sudden fright reaction, such as might be caused by an explosion, can be described as an emotion). While fascinating, these discussions would take space away from the true focus of the book: How can I apply the science of body language in my everyday conversations?

To draw the most accurate conclusions, it is first necessary to learn about five basic principles for the interpretation of body language. (This is the subject of Chapter 1.) These principles help you to choose the right explanation for a particular visual cue. One of the more innovative aspects of the book is the division into seven groups of the most useful, most usable, and most common nonverbal signals that occur in everyday conversation.

Chapter 2 deals with gestures that support contact with other people. These postures and attitudes often have a positive effect on the conversation; as a result, we generally refer to them as “positive body language.”

Chapter 3 looks at movements that exude self-confidence and dominance. Behavior that is too dominant or leads to breaking off contact is examined in Chapter 4 as “negative body language.”

All body language reflects emotions that are being experienced, but in Chapter 5 we will explore in particular forms of nonverbal communication that primarily indicate the intense experience of various emotions.

Emotions that can be communicated by the face form the basis for Chapter 6.

In Chapter 7, we will take a closer look at microexpressions, a special form of short and subtle facial expressions.

Chapter 8 is devoted to expressions and gestures that are useful in negotiations, because they reflect the body language that is relevant to the decisionmaking process.

In Chapter 9, you can apply (using the SCAN method) what you have learned about body language to a number of standard situations in which expressions and gestures from all the chapters are included.

At the end of each chapter, there is a clear and simple summary. This will help you to apply your growing knowledge of body language during day-to-day conversations, sales pitches, interviews, and negotiations. In addition to teaching you how to interpret body language, our book aims to go a step further: Once you understand the meaning of certain manifestations of body language, what do you do with this information? How do you react? To help you answer these questions, most of the gestures and expressions are accompanied by useful tips about the best way to respond if your conversation partners display this type of behavior. In this way, you will be able to achieve your conversational objective in the quickest and easier manner.

1

The Five Principles of Body Language Intelligence



IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU'LL DISCOVER:

- The bedrock principles that guide every interpretation
 - How body language changes across different cultures
-



For every interpretation of body language, it is important to devote attention to a number of crucial principles that influence the meaning of all attitudes, gestures, and expressions (and also the conclusions you draw about them). These five principles are the bedrock of meaningful body language interpretation. You'll learn to increase your body language intelligence by connecting what you see on the outside to what is really happening on the inside.

These basic principles apply to nonverbal communication in photographs and films, as well as in conversations. Learning to take proper account of all five basic principles when you interpret body language and apply them to your conclusions is the foundation of correctly understanding what's *really* being communicated in your daily interactions.

1. Combinations Confirm Your Assumptions

The interpretations that you will find in the following chapters are only accurate in 60 to 80 percent of situations, if they occur singly or in isolation. If you see a certain movement occur repeatedly, the likelihood is greater that the interpretation is correct. If within a short period of time you see a combination of three to five movements that all give a similar signal, you can draw your conclusion with a high degree of certainty.

If someone touches the tip of his nose just once during a conversation, it may be that he simply has an itchy nose. But if during a two-minute period someone touches his nose, rubs his eyes, covers his mouth, takes a step backward, avoids eye contact, and crosses his arms, then there is a good chance that he either finds the situation stressful or that he is lying.

2. What Is Happening on the Inside Is What You See on the Outside

If you have to make a choice between what you hear (words) and what you see (movements), it is better to believe what you see. The body compensates for the things that are said. It is possible to put up a pretense or to hide stress for a short time, but as far as nonverbal communication is concerned it is much more difficult to conceal or falsify crucial information. Why? Our body instinctively shows on the outside what is happening on the inside.

Numerous studies have shown that our limbic system works faster than our powers of rational thought; expressions and gestures tend to tell the truth before we can consciously adjust

our behavior. This conscious adjustment is ten thousand times slower than the uncontrollable signals of the limbic system. What people are experiencing internally will therefore be visible externally. The reverse is true as well: When you see someone with a facial expression that is not sad, it is highly likely that this person is not experiencing sadness at that moment. However, you still need to take into account principle number 5: If this person never has a sad facial expression, even at times when you know that she is experiencing sadness, you will need to amend your conclusions.

3. Context Influences Body Language

During our training courses, we are often asked: If someone often crosses his arms, does this mean he has a closed personality? What do you think? Is the answer to this question yes or no? If you correctly apply basic principle number 3, the right answer is “it all depends.” Whether or not someone has her arms crossed is dependent on the context in which she finds herself. For example, a person standing outside in the middle of winter who has forgotten her coat may very well have her arms crossed, but this simply means that she is cold. At the same time, she may very well be conducting a pleasant and enthusiastic conversation with her friends!

But what about someone dressed in doctor’s clothing and discussing something with a colleague in a hospital corridor? Hospitals are usually warm, so that in this case the crossed arms probably have something to do with the nature of the conversation. In other words, you need to pay careful attention to

WITHOUT SAYING A WORD

the location, the situation, and the surroundings of the person about whom you wish to draw conclusions.

**“ Body language always
compensates for the things that are
said with words. ”**

4. Look for Changes

We always try to avoid making interpretations based on a single photograph. If you have no points of comparison, your conclusions will be less accurate. To make reliable conclusions, what we look for above all are large and strong changes in body language positions. For example, if someone suddenly puts his legs in a debate position during a negotiation, while he otherwise seems relaxed, this has much greater meaning than if he has his legs in the debate position from the beginning of the discussion.

Timing is also very important: A significant change in body language position at the moment when a new price is mentioned says much more than if the same movement is made at a neutral moment in the conversation.

5. Take Account of Habits

When we give interpretations of meaning for a gesture like touching your nose, we often hear people say: “Yes, but I regularly

touch the end of my nose when I am speaking. Everyone in my family does it. But it doesn't mean we are lying!" This may be true: When you apply the fifth basic principle touching the nose may lose its traditional interpretation. Pay careful attention to the habits of the person you are interpreting as well as to movements that are "normal" for someone in the specific situation.

If someone has developed a particular movement as a habit over a number of years, normal interpretations of this movement given in the following chapters will not necessarily be correct.

If, for instance, someone is always in the habit of smiling, even when she is feeling hostile, then you cannot automatically interpret this person's smile as an indication of pleasure. In order to know which movements, gestures, and expressions you need to exclude from your interpretation as unreliable, you first need to examine a sufficient number of situations to establish this person's habits. In addition to habits, outside factors such as taking drugs or medicines, using alcohol, or having gesture altering treatments such as plastic surgery or Botox can all play a role. By taking proper account of a person's habits, you can avoid mistakes such as interpreting a genuine expression of pleasure as an expression of contempt.

“ Everybody speaks a body language. ”

IS BODY LANGUAGE CULTURE DEPENDENT?

Experts are divided on this question. It is a subject that can lead to endless discussions, not least because of the need to first define exactly what is meant by the terms “body language” and “culture dependent” in the context of this specific question.

For example, some gestures are extremely offensive in one country, but very positive elsewhere. Consider the “circle” gesture made by closing the thumb and the index finger. In the United States and countries like Belgium and the Netherlands, this means “okay.” In France, it means “zero.” In Brazil, it means . . . something you should probably avoid saying. In this case, body language clearly differs from culture to culture. However, there are certain micro-expressions that studies have shown to be associated with particular emotions in the same way in more than twenty different cultures. Similarly, North Americans and Europeans will make some hand gestures less frequently but bigger, whereas Asians will make the same gesture more frequently but smaller. Does this mean that in these contexts body language is culture independent?

So, which of the experts are right? It is difficult to say, but these examples make clear that the subject of non-verbal communication is not only wide-ranging and complex, but also depends on how you interpret the term “body language.” One thing is certain: One way or another, everybody speaks a body language.

The Five Principles of Body Language Intelligence

The five basic principles are crucial. To draw accurate conclusions, you must apply all five to every interpretation of body language you make. Always keep them in mind and test all your assumptions against them. To make them easy to remember, we have combined the most important word of each of the five principles into the following sentence:

“Combinations Within Context Change Habits.”

With these five basic principles for interpreting body language, you are sufficiently well-armed to correctly identify the meanings of the movements, gestures, and expressions in the following chapters.

2

Self-confident Body Language



IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU'LL DISCOVER:

- How to recognize when your conversation partner is receptive
 - The body movements that stimulate trust and cooperation
-



When I was *thirteen years* old, my first job was to distribute fliers to pharmacies. This involved me asking the pharmacist if I could place the fliers in a spot where they could easily be seen. Initially, I was very successful. On the first morning, I visited fifteen shops and none of them refused my request. Things went less smoothly for my girlfriend, who had the same task: It took her much longer and some of the pharmacists were unwilling to cooperate.

When it was my turn to be confronted with my first refusal, however, I immediately had the feeling that my initial enthusiasm had disappeared. The energy and power with which I had previously entered the stores were suddenly missing. This change of attitude also had a dramatic impact on my effectiveness. More refusals followed. But what had actually changed? Why did the same

WITHOUT SAYING A WORD

sentence—“Can I please put these fliers here on your counter?”—now produce such a different result from a few hours earlier? Why did the change in the way I felt make such a difference to the results I achieved?

What I didn't realize at the time is that the key to success in situations of this kind is not the sentence, but the number of contact-supporting gestures you use when speaking it. The purpose of this chapter is to show you how you can use positive body language to help you convince people and how you can recognize the same signals in others.

Leaning the Upper Body Forward



**POSITIVE ATTITUDE,
INTEREST**

The position of the upper body gives you basic information about the other person's attitude toward you. If the upper body is leaning back or turned away, particularly if the arms are crossed, there is a good chance that the person wants to distance himself from the subject under discussion. Averting the upper body in this way is usually a sign that someone is not listening closely to what you are saying. Perhaps the subject is not important or interesting enough for him to lean forward in your direction. Many studies support this conclusion, including Schlenker in 1975.

If you want someone to listen to you carefully, it is important to get her to orientate her body toward you rather than away from you, since this means interest. You can also try to lean

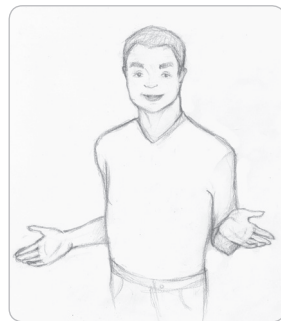
more forward in her direction, since it is possible that the other person may be copying your own more distanced body language. If the other person leans forward at the same moment you do, this is a good sign, because your conversation partner is responding to your positive body language.

Opening the Palms of the Hand

Open palms are a sign of peaceful intentions. It shows that you have nothing to hide, you're unarmed, and you're mentally open to what the other person is saying.

You know that the contact is going well if you regularly see opened palms. This is a sign of openness and a signal to the other person that his words are being experienced as respectful, positive, and valuable. The more frequently a person stretches out his hands in front of him, the greater the openness and honesty he wishes to communicate. This gesture can be strengthened by spreading the fingers or bending them slightly upward, so that the hand forms a kind of cup. Communicating with opened palms improves interpersonal contact. A person whose palms are open is more easily trusted. By showing the inside of our hands, we prove that we have nothing to hide. Liars are more inclined to keep their hands concealed.

There is an historical explanation for the positive meaning attached to open hands. In the past, showing your hands in this way demonstrated that



OPENNESS, HONESTY

WITHOUT SAYING A WORD

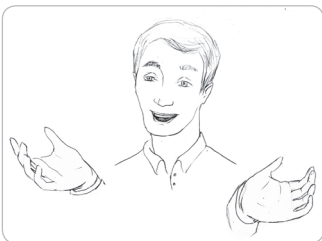
you were unarmed and had positive intentions. For this reason, open palms have been associated since ancient times with sincerity, loyalty, and willingness to listen. The signal of surrender—with the hands raised above the head—similarly shows that you do not have a weapon.

This also explains why at crucial moments religious leaders show their palms. Likewise, oaths are often taken with one hand on the heart and the other raised in an open position. This is still the case, for example, when people need to swear on the Bible during legal hearings in court.

If a person intends to be completely open and honest, she will stretch out one or both hands toward her conversation partner. If she wishes to emphasize this gesture, she will show more of the inside of her opened palm. These movements often happen wholly involuntarily, as is the case with so much of body language. When somebody is a bad liar or is trying to hide something, she will often keep her hands held behind her back. In the past, this was also a way to conceal a weapon.

Showing Your Wrists

Women who feel attracted to a man will often hold their glass in a way that exposes their wrists. This can be interpreted as a sign of openness. In other situations, it means that someone wants to emphasize their sincerity and benign intentions.



OPENNESS, SINCERITY

Hand Movements Near the Mouth

When someone sitting down holds his hands near his mouth and makes gestures that emphasize or support his words, this helps to ensure a good contact with his conversation partner. Holding the hands in this way emphasizes that the speaker wants to be properly understood, as though he wants to use his hands to give his words more power.



EMPHASIZING WORDS

Open Hands on the Table

If during a negotiation someone pushes her glass or cup to one side—the same side as the hand she was drinking with—this is a sign of openness and acceptance. In this way, her arm movement shows that she wishes to place no barriers between herself and her conversation partner, in contrast to the impression that would be given by moving the cup or glass to the opposite side.



OPENNESS, ACCEPTANCE

Talking with Your Hands

Some people have the art of being able to talk with their hands. Even if they are speaking to you in a different language, you can still understand what they mean. If you work in the training or sales sectors, talking with your hands can help your listeners to visualize what you are saying. This stimulates the right side of their brains,

which processes visualizations, emotions, and intuition. In this way, you communicate with both the rational left half of the brain and with the more emotional right half, which not only makes it easier for listeners to remember new content, but also makes that content seem more convincing. Research by Zuckerman, De Paulo, and Rosenthal in 1981 has shown that liars are less inclined to support their words with their hands.



ILLUSTRATING WORDS

The Vertical Handshake

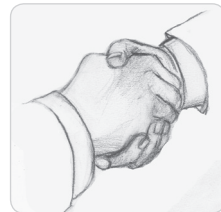
In Roman times, it was the custom when shaking hands to grab hold of the other person's wrist. This was a quick way to check that he was not hiding a dagger in his sleeve. Nowadays, a handshake shows that we are willing to make someone's acquaintance. It is an important element in the physical assessment of the other person's energy and vitality. Even in these days of teleconferencing, businesspeople are still prepared to pay the price of an airline ticket so that they can meet future partners face to face and can

feel their handshakes. In the Middle East, a written contract is not binding until the two parties have shaken hands.

There are two aspects essential to establish a good and equal understanding during the handshake. First, it is important that both hands are in a vertical position, so that neither of the parties is superior or inferior to the other. Second, the level of pressure applied during the handshake must be the same on both sides. If one person squeezes with 70 percent force, while the other only squeezes with 50 percent, the first person should reduce his pressure by 20 percent. If the other person squeezes with 90 percent force, the first person should increase their pressure by 20 percent until it also comes up to the same level as their partner.

The person who takes the initiative to strengthen or weaken the handshake will depend on the context, the situation, and their awareness of the rules of body language. If you meet a group of ten different people, it is possible that you may also need to change the verticality and the pressure of your handshake ten times, so that you can make everyone's acquaintance on the same footing.

When a man is being introduced to a woman, he may need to adjust handshake pressure and apply relatively less than he would with a man, which is a sign of respect. A man with a positive attitude toward a woman will often automatically reduce his handshake to her level of pressure. A painfully hard handshake might be interpreted by her as a signal of dominance, lack of respect, bad manners, or lack of



EQUALITY, GOOD UNDERSTANDING

empathy. Women should interpret hard handshakes as warnings to be careful when dealing with this type of man, since it is possible that he might not fully respect their opinions.

The message for men is that they need to take account of the strength of their hands. Thanks to evolutionary development, the male grip is now capable of exerting a squeezing pressure of forty-five kilograms. In the past, this was useful for carrying, holding, hitting, or throwing things, but power of this kind is less useful in a handshake! We all remember when the newly elected Donald Trump and Emmanuel Macron looked as if they were attempting to squeeze each other to death with their handshakes at the 2017 NATO conference in Brussels. This may make good TV, but it's not a good body language habit to get into.

The Handshake with Both Hands

A handshake with both hands—the so-called glove handshake—can be an expression of warmth, trust, and kindness toward the person whose hand you are shaking. Once again, it is necessary to remember two important aspects.

First, it is the initial positioning of the left hand that makes clear to the other person that you intend to give her a handshake with both hands. The movement demonstrates a desire for a sincere relationship, almost as if you wish to embrace her. The left hand serves as the indicator of closeness. The higher you place your left hand on the other person's right arm, the clearer you make your desire to get closer to her in your relationship. It is an expression of your good intentions. Taking hold of the elbow with your left hand demonstrates more affection than taking hold



TRUST, WARM FEELINGS

of the wrist. But don't forget that it is also important to combine these movements with other reassuring signals, so that the other person does not mistakenly think that the handshake is intended to dominate her.

Second, as the initiating person you need to be aware of how far your left hand intrudes into the other person's personal space. Taking hold of the wrist or the upper arm will only support the contact if a good bond already exists between you. Placing the left hand on the upper arm illustrates a very close level of attachment and is almost equivalent to an embrace. If this warmth of feeling is not mutual or if there is no good reason for the initiator to demonstrate such warmth, the glove handshake may arouse suspicion or even distrust in the other person. It is therefore crucial with this type of handshake to be guided by authentic motives and not simply be a desire to make a good impression.

Stretching Out Your Legs

If the participants in our training sessions stretch out their legs in front of them in a relaxed manner when they are examining the results of one



INTEREST, ACCEPTANCE

of the test exercises, this generally means that they found the test interesting. Likewise, if during a discussion one of the conversation partners suddenly uncrosses his legs and stretches them out, this too is a signal of interest and acceptance. If the other conversation partner wishes to express similar interest, she can reciprocate with the same leg movement.

Tilting Your Head to One Side



**VULNERABILITY,
INTEREST,
UNDERSTANDING**

Tilting your head to one side is a movement that has its origin in the animal world. An attacking tiger will aim for the neck of its intended victim, since this is the prey's most vulnerable spot. Similarly, during fights to win mating rights with a female or to secure leadership of a wolfpack, the neck is often the target of preference during combat. In humans, tilting the head to expose the side of the neck is a signal of a willingness to adopt a vulnerable position. Whenever we want to display trust, commitment, approval, or interest, we bare our neck to others. It is almost as if we signal our surrender to the other person's will. In this way, we show that we are ready to listen, without contradiction. When someone listens to you with a tilted head, this is meant as an expression of confidence and an acceptance of what you are saying.

If you are involved in negotiations or are engaged in a debate and want to be interrupted less frequently by your opponent, try tilting your head slightly to the right. You can identify a negative attitude in your rival by one or more of the following nonverbal

signs: hands in pockets, folded arms, a doubtful stroking of the chin, hands behind the back, tense shoulders, a dirty look, clasped hands, or the body turned away from you.

BARACK OBAMA AND HIS TILTED HEAD

President Barack Obama often held his head to one side when he took part in political debates. In animals, exposing the jugular vein in this way is a sign of trust. It is similar to the way a dog rolls on its back and displays its stomach, as a signal of surrender. In this manner, Obama showed understanding for his political opponents, who demonstrated less hostility and resistance as a result. Many of the photographs of Obama during his first presidential campaign depict him with his head in this tilted position, with the intention of emphasizing his interested expression as a means of uniting voters behind his cause.

Smiling

When you smile at someone, the recipient will often smile back, which creates a positive feeling between you. This happens more or less automatically. In prehistoric times, our ancestors used the smile to show that they had friendly intentions or belonged to the same group. Nowadays, smiles often serve to break the ice when we first meet someone



FRIENDLY INTENTIONS

WITHOUT SAYING A WORD

new. Research has shown that if you smile and laugh regularly (so that it becomes second nature to you), your relations with other people will run more smoothly, last longer, and yield more positive results.

It is also a good idea to smile occasionally during conversations and discussions to show that you understand the other person. Some people have a habit of smiling too much, often to hide shyness. This reduces their self-confidence, which sometimes means that they are taken less seriously in a business context.

Eye Contact

In the West, we speak of eye contact as when someone looks her conversation partner in the eye at least 70 percent of the time. Fretz, Corn, Tuemmler, and Bellet proved in 1979 that good eye contact created a good bond between therapists and their patients. Seventy percent is a good guideline—any more can be seen as staring and come across as aggressive or just plain weird. In Asian cultures, eye contact occurs less frequently and for shorter durations than in the West. While in the West a reasonable amount of eye contact is generally viewed positively, in Asia it can be seen as disrespectful. Employees will often avoid making eye contact with their superiors, for example, not out of shyness or embarrassment, but out of respect.

Nodding Your Head

Giving a nod with your head is a signal of acceptance, a sign that you are listening. If you want someone to say something more, it is a good idea to nod your head and adopt an open body stance. This is one of the many gestures confirmed by Buli in 1983 as being conducive to creating a good and positive understanding in the course of a conversation.



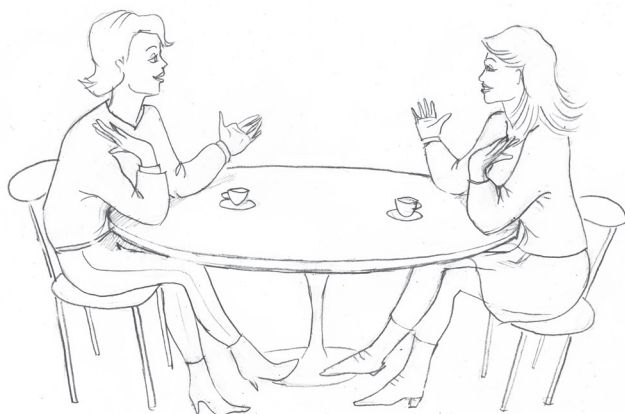
**LISTENING,
PAYING
ATTENTION**

Mirroring Body Language

The mirroring of body language makes the other person feel accepted, which is a good first step toward mutual understanding. This mirroring occurs in a natural way between friends, loved ones, and people of the same status. Next time you have a warm and friendly conversation with someone, take a few seconds to look at his body language: You will quickly notice similarities with your own. In much the same manner, children frequently adopt the nonverbal movements of their parents. We are less keen to mirror people we don't know or like, such as the people we meet in an elevator or standing in a line.

Even so, mirroring body language is one of the most effective methods for immediately making good contact with others. If you meet someone important for the first time, try to copy their body position, movements, facial expressions, and the timbre of their voice. Make sure you don't mimic the other person too

WITHOUT SAYING A WORD



APPROVAL, SIMILAR OPINIONS

closely, but perform a number of elements that are easy to simulate. After a short time, your conversation partner will subconsciously experience that they feel comfortable with you. People will remember you as someone who it is good to talk with. This happens because they see their own reflection mirrored in you.

Body Position

If you are listening to someone, it is best to lean slightly forward and nod gently. Focus your eyes on your conversation partner and tilt your head a little bit to the right. If you are talking to someone, make sure that your arms and legs are not crossed. If you are standing, keep your back upright: This allows you to breathe more deeply than with a bent back. A straight back lets people see that you are giving yourself the necessary room and air. As a result, they will be more prepared to listen to you, have more interest in what you say, and will take your opinions more seriously.

Relaxed Body Positions

When you are giving a presentation, the most important thing is to devote sufficient attention to the first few minutes. These are the moments when your audience gets their first impression of you. In this respect, body language is crucial. You can speak the same opening sentences in every presentation you do, but the way these sentences are interpreted by the participants will depend on your nonverbal communication. What you express with your body will also have a major impact on your voice and intonation.

This is the reason why many politicians take lessons from body language coaches: to improve the way they come across to the public. One of their most common mistakes is to try and reproduce movements and gestures that they have learned by rote, rather than trying to change the way they feel inside. When this happens, the movements and gestures always seem artificial: They do not give the impression of someone who is saying what they really feel.

For example, one of the reasons many voters in the 2016 U.S. presidential election felt that Hillary Clinton was inauthentic was because of her use of studied gestures and mannerisms. Rather than using natural gestures, she relied upon practiced movements which often appeared stiff and artificial. Her extensive training made her appear calm, but also somewhat insincere. Or consider the difference in body language between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney during the American presidential elections in 2012. It was clear that Obama was much more in touch with his emotions. This was evident from the synchronization between his gestures, his facial expressions,

WITHOUT SAYING A WORD

and his words. You had the feeling that what he was saying was authentic. With Romney, gestures and facial expressions were not always coordinated with his words. In fact, they were sometimes contradictory. This gave the impression that he had learned his lines well, but was not really convinced by his own arguments.

Our body language will betray us when we are uncertain or when we do not speak from the heart. The transformation of our body language must therefore always begin with the transformation of our inner feelings.

It is always a good idea to get yourself into the right mood for a presentation. You can do this, for example, by imagining that you are talking to friends. Observe in advance your own body language when you are relaxing with friends and try to transfer this to the podium. Do your best to ensure that you feel and behave in exactly the same way as when you are in comfortable and familiar surroundings.

Another good method (which works for some people) is to assume the qualities of a cat. Next time you look at a cat (or other animal), watch carefully the way it behaves. You will probably notice that a cat always seems relaxed, whether it is walking, sitting, or sleeping. Try to adopt this same relaxed, catlike attitude by sitting in a completely relaxed position. Think hard about this position until you find a posture where you feel wholly at ease. Do the same during a presentation: take up a stance where you feel comfortable, with your feet stable on the ground. If you feel comfortable with yourself, your audience will feel comfortable with you.

Pay Attention to Habits and Clothing

Clothes are another important element in making a good first impression. If you have your body language fully under control and use it correctly, you can probably come across as the “big boss” even if you are only wearing swimming trunks. In most situations, however, adjusting your clothing to the environment and the expectations of your conversation partner can help to positively influence the contact.

Clean and tidy clothes are a first signal of respect toward your listener. You have made an effort to look good for the occasion by putting on your best suit for her, and this is generally appreciated. Conversely, if you enter a room for a meeting dressed in baggy trousers and a moth-eaten sweater, the first impression you create will be a negative one. If you dress in a style that matches or reflects your conversation partner, that partner will experience the feeling that you already have something in common.

The same principles apply when you are preparing a presentation. Try to get a sense for the mentality of your audience. Think about how you can stimulate their interest and understanding. What will make them welcome you with a smile and warm applause?

A few years ago, we were giving a presentation in Qatar, where people dress in the traditional Arab manner. The men wore long white gowns with large sleeves and a headdress, while the women were wrapped from head to toe in black robes, with scarves that sometimes even covered their faces. The audience was there to learn more about body language. But what on earth could we do to try and build a rapport with them from the start?

First, we decided to wear clothing that was appropriate to the setting: long sleeves and legs fully covered. We also made sure

that we didn't stand too close to each other and that we avoided hand gestures that might be considered offensive in that part of the world. Second, Patryk opened the presentation with a few simple sentences in Arabic, which immediately brought a round of applause. The ice was broken.

When you are visiting new and unknown locations, it is always useful to make inquiries about the local dress code and about correct ways to greet people. In Qatar, for example, it is the custom that men shake hands with men and women shake hands with women, but that men and women never shake hands with each other. It is valuable to know this in advance, so that you don't break any cultural taboos.

Another good example is a presentation that was given by one of our newly appointed trainers to a large group of recruitment consultants. The subject of the presentation, first impressions, seemed a good choice. Because we had seen him perform well a week earlier we didn't feel it was necessary to question him about his content in detail. To our—and the audience's—absolute amazement, he appeared on the podium dressed as a clown! He tried to convince this serious group of spectators to join him in singing a song, but the result was not as amusing as he anticipated and his audience turned against him. This underlines the need to think carefully about whether the things that interest and amuse you will also interest and amuse your audience.

THE IMPACT OF BOTOX ON BODY LANGUAGE

Researchers at the University of Southern California and Duke University have confirmed that the use of Botox reduces a person's capacity to empathize. The injection of Botox freezes the muscles of the face, which restricts the ability to mirror the facial expressions of others. By limiting the automatic operation of the mirror neurons, Botox users are less able to recreate the emotions they observe in others, which is an important way to make emotional connections with others and to display empathy. Columbia University reached much the same conclusions in their study of Botox.

What are the possible consequences? According to David Havas at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, "Botox selectively hinders the processing of our emotional language." Subsequent publications have translated this into an assumption that Botox can damage your friendships, because people can no longer read your empathy in your face.

Expressiveness

People like to listen to others with an attentive facial expression. Everyone prefers an open expression that encourages confidence to a closed poker face that encourages distrust. This was established in 1987 by Coker and Burgoon, and was confirmed a year later by the research of Friedman, Riggio, and Cassella.

Expressiveness of the face is just as important as expressiveness of the rest of the body. When the movement of the hands

WITHOUT SAYING A WORD

supports the words being spoken, it is easier to concentrate on what is actually being said. When someone is sitting, it is best to place the hands somewhere between the midriff and the chin, in the area of the so-called “Clinton box,” which we will discuss in the next chapter. Of course, it is important that your expressiveness is in keeping with what you are hearing. For example, a strange or unexpected movement of the hands can appear aggressive or unreliable in certain circumstances.

S U M M A R Y	
Leaning the upper body forward	Positive attitude, interest
Opening the palms of the hand	Openness, honesty
Showing your wrists	Openness, sincerity
Hand movements near the mouth	Emphasizing words
Open hands on the table	Openness, acceptance
Talking with your hands	Illustrating words
The vertical handshake	Equality, good understanding
The handshake with both hands	Trust, warm feelings
Stretching out your legs	Interest, acceptance
Tilting your head to one side	Vulnerability, interest, understanding
Smiling	Friendly intentions
Eye contact	Good, if practiced about 70 percent of the time
Nodding your head	Listening, paying attention
Mirroring body language	Approval, similar opinions



3



Positive Body Language



IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU'LL DISCOVER:

- The power positions that will make you look more self-confident
 - The best ways to exude confidence without appearing arrogant
-



Some years ago, we experienced a nasty surprise one morning, when we were giving a seminar to a group of well-known businessmen. That morning, Patryk had put on a nice shirt and an elegant pair of trousers, but when we arrived in the training room we discovered that he had forgotten to put on an equally smart pair of shoes. Instead, there he stood, in his Crocs sandals! As soon as the day's session started, I snuck out for a quarter of an hour to fetch Patryk's proper shoes from home, which he then put on during the first coffee break.

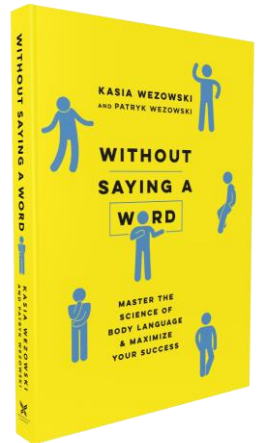
When the training resumed after the break, we asked the participants if they noticed any change in Patryk's appearance. The large majority said that they saw no difference. Or if they had seen something, they had already forgotten it—which sounds curious on the face of it, because the Crocs were really hard to miss!

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