

Quick Guide: Speak Volumes Silently

Have you ever been told you can be read like a book? Are you aware when your body language is "leaking" or giving you away? Words are only a very small part of communication: while you are saying the words, your body is speaking volumes! So if you want to make sure you send all your messages in the way you intend them, here are the **top ten tips** to help you:

- 1. Get the inner dialogue right.** If your mind says "Oh dear..." or "I'm not doing this very well" the chances are you will give away your feelings despite your attempts to control them. If you are poised, open, dignified and focused inside, you will transmit this in your body language and conversations.
- 2. The eyes have it.** Some people are awkward to look straight in the eye, and if you are uncomfortable you will tend to look away. Aim for a steady, relaxed eye contact.
- 3. What's your face saying?** Do you look comfortable and confident or are your eyebrows raised? Are you frowning? Aim to smile with your eyes, not just your mouth.
- 4. Your mouth and jaw** can signal tension or aggression, especially if you wear a false or fixed smile. Watch for your automatic smile which says "please don't be angry" or "I don't want to appear rude" when you have some straight talking to do.
- 5.** Notice how changes in the **pitch and tone of your voice** can signal timidity, nervousness, sarcasm etc. Breathing and relaxation can help you project your voice confidently.
- 6. Likewise, check your pace and volume.** Too slow or quiet and you will irritate your listener; too fast and you will sound insincere or untruthful.
- 7.** Once you're aware of all the above, **think about your posture and gait.** If you hold yourself upright and well-balanced (not on one foot or slouched) you are more likely to convey that message visually and verbally.
- 8. Beware your gestures!** Some gestures bring to life what you are saying; others are irritating or distracting. Fiddling conveys nervousness, tapping indicates impatience or anger.
- 9. Get to know your own personal space** and be sensitive to that of others. Aim to stand or sit directly in front of the other person. And if there is a height difference make sure it is to your advantage.
- 10. Remember:** people tend to believe more of what they see, than what they hear. So help them believe what they see, with your positive visual messages.

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