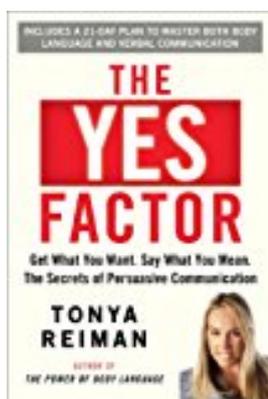


[PDF] The Yes Factor: Get What You Want. Say What You Mean. The Secrets Of Persuasive Communication

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Description:

About the Author Tonya Reiman is a weekly Fox News Channel contributor. A motivational speaker, consultant, and corporate trainer, she has appeared on *The O'Reilly Factor*, the *Today*

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ONE

BODY LANGUAGE BASICS

“A man is not good or bad for one action.”

—*Thomas Fuller*

My friends love it when we walk into a room of strangers and I check out anyone within sight. When I look at a person for the first time, I silently take it all in: how she moves, how she stands, the tone of her voice, all the micro (as well as macro) expressions and gestures that she doesn't even realize she makes but that speak so loudly to me. I know that is the fastest way to see what someone is all about. Of course, that usually works until the group finds out what I do for a living, and then everyone pretty much freezes.

Before we dive into verbal communication, I'd like to give you a quick overview of some important body-language tools.

Studies have found that in certain settings as much as 93 percent of our communication is nonverbal. Paul Ekman and his colleagues have determined that forty-three finely tuned muscles in the human face can be combined and reorganized into ten thousand possible combinations of expressions. In a single interaction, approximately one thousand nonverbal factors help convey your message.

Your brain's communication system changes with every nonverbal interaction, providing the information you need to know about another person before he so much as speaks.

Body language is the core of who we demonstrate ourselves to be. You can typically tell the mail-room clerk from the CEO, even if both wear suits. When they are at work, regardless of their attire, they each present differently.

No matter what, there are times when everyone is intimidated. Frequently that intimidation is based on your perception of who you are in a given situation. Years ago while doing a show, I met a gentleman who was well known within his circle of peers. I asked if we could take a picture together, which is something I rarely do. I heard my own apprehension as soon as the words started, and he either consciously or unconsciously picked up on those cues of insecurity, and—*wham!*—what a shift in his interaction with me. I automatically gave away my power and with that my alpha position. We went from equals—two individuals who were guests on a TV show—to superior and inferior. (Guess which one I was?) I actually watched the entire scene unfold and was helpless to regain my status in the brief time that I had. What a lesson that was.

I had a speaking engagement at a large hotel recently. As is my habit, I got up early that morning to go into the area I would be speaking in and “own the room.” As I walked to the meeting area, I noticed one of the hotel staff members just ahead of me.

“Good morning,” I said.

“Good morning,” he replied with a big smile. Then he looked down.

That one movement told me so much about him and his position in that hotel. Maybe in a bar he would have acted in an entirely different manner. But in situational body language context, he knew that I was the paying customer and he was the paid staff.

When I walk down the corridors of Fox News, I’m loving it—confidence all the way. If I were to encounter someone I really admired and was intimidated by—gulp—I’d probably instinctively look down too.

BASELINE FIRST

In order to understand someone’s nonverbal signals, you need to baseline that person. This is also called norming. Everything from the handshake to the way someone stands reveals who he is. A handshake can tell you if someone is dominant or submissive. Baselineing will also tell you if someone is right-brained or left-brained, extroverted or introverted— great information to have. You’ll also be able to tell if this is the type of person who wants just the facts and only the facts, or a person who deals with information based on instinct. In later chapters, you’ll learn how to read stance, gestures, and facial expressions. You’ll understand the language of the eyes.

Note the person’s normal eye position when he is speaking and remembering. Watch where the eyes go while the person is speaking, and then during a nonthreatening conversation casually ask a question that will make the subject try to remember something visual and factual. Watch his face as he answers. Does he look up left or right, side left or right, or down left or right?

“Do you remember that crazy HR file clerk who worked here a couple of years ago? You know, the one who was caught on camera going through everybody’s files. What was his name?” Continue asking similar questions until you see a pattern of eye movements from your subject. “What year did he work here, anyway?” That incorporates a name and a number. Where is the person looking to retrieve this information? “Didn’t he date someone from corporate finance?”

Soon you’ll be aware of how this person recalls facts. Then when you want the truth about something (“Did you call Jane Brown when I asked you to last week?”), just ask. If he has been consistently looking up to the left when recalling facts, he will probably look up to the right when fabricating a false story, because he must access a different part of the brain to construct a lie than he would to recall actual details.

Although body language is often context driven, it can tell a lot about a person and how he feels about himself. What comes first, charisma or confidence? Whether it’s the CEO walking into a meeting, the teacher entering the classroom, the girl entering the bar, or the sales rep stepping into the doctor’s office, everyone is unconsciously (or consciously) telegraphing a message to everyone else. That message says, “This is who I am.” This is true both in the crucial first seconds of meeting and throughout the entire relationship.

Using and understanding body language benefits the person who has mastered the movements of dominance and confidence. Confidence breeds charisma, which leads to the perception that you are a success. A lack of confidence can lead to a negative aura, which can cost jobs, money, and social influence.

Closed body language literally closes you off. If you are having a bad day or feeling off, change your physiology. When you change position, you can literally change your outlook. Your brain chemistry gets shifted, and you might find that you feel better. Pick your head up, put your shoulders back, smile, open up your arms and legs, and *stretch*. Our emotional state is usually reflected in our

position. Allow your state to be transformed as you stretch and change your physical self. Go ahead, right now, take a second and stretch your neck, your shoulders, and your torso. Do a big morning stretch. No matter how good (or bad) you are currently feeling, I bet you'll feel better.

This can be done with others, as well. In fact, two news anchors at a local station share an on-air morning stretch every day around seven-thirty. She stands, yawns, and stretches. He stands, yawns, and stretches. The camera sweeps through the studio, and all of the staff members in view are doing the same thing.

When you find you are confronted with an individual who just won't budge on his position, change his physiology. Since we now know that a person who is emotionally closed off to an idea will usually close off physically as well, if we get him to unlock his body, we have an opportunity to unlock his mind. The phrase "Try to see it from my side" is a visual of this and means a lot. Get your target to physically move to a different angle or into a different position so that he can see a new perspective.

One of the physical signs of anxiety is breathing. If a person is feeling anxious and trying to hide it by masking his facial expressions, watch his breathing. Typically, someone who is upset or highly frustrated will take shallow breaths. Look for an occasional deep breath, which signals the person's need to pull in a large amount of oxygen in an effort to calm the nerves.

Body language also benefits those who have mastered the verbal aspect of persuasion. By simply changing position, moving closer, smiling, and nodding at key moments (and a few other techniques you'll learn about later), you are able to influence situations, get the girl or guy, make the sale, close the deal, or win over the discussion.

At all times, you need to be demonstrating confidence via good posture, subtle touch, open, smiling expressions, appropriate spatial awareness, cooperation via open arms and forward stance, and reassurance by way of smiles and pats on the back. And, of course, the golden nugget is to make sure that you are always listening to what others say as well as what they don't say.

Often, people will use seemingly innocuous movements that they do not realize are perceived as negative by others. In general, any display of insecurity, anger, hostility, contempt, or boredom is considerably dangerous to social dynamics and business.

Poor body language is the nonverbal equivalent of throwing in the towel, and it signals defeat. Unfortunately, it does not take long before these nonverbal cues begin to dictate your moods, leading to a self-perpetuating cycle of frequent bouts of low energy, gloom, and diminished confidence.

As you can see, understanding body language is more than just figuring out facial expressions. Although the face is often what we notice first, a major source of outflow comes from the lower half of the body. The legs and feet can tell you a great deal about someone. For example, when speaking to another person, look to his feet to see the direction in which they are pointed. Are they pointed toward you? Then you are probably holding his interest. Are they pointed toward the door? If so...
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