

Body Language Interview Tips

By Denise Taylor

I can't stress enough to you how important your body language is during an interview. Whether you do it consciously or subconsciously, your **body language** expresses your feelings to the person that you're speaking with. Interviewers pick up on these things and they have significant impact on their decision making process.

Have you ever spoken with someone who won't look you directly in the eyes? The feeling that you have about their communication skills differs quite a bit from the person who will look right at you. You probably won't feel a connection with the person that's spending more time looking at their feet. You might wonder if they're even interested in speaking with you, or have questions about their confidence level. Your *body language* plays a big part in the relationship building process that happens during the interview.

Here are some tips to help you improve your body language during your next interview.

Eye contact

This is a very crucial part, not only of the interview, but in your daily contacts with people. Maintain good eye contact with the people with whom you are interviewing. Do not glare at them. Do not look down, up, or to the side of them; that strongly suggests a lack of confidence. However, do look at them in the eye in a friendly manner. Look directly at the person when you speak. It is okay to look away for a few seconds especially when you may need to think about a response to a tough question. Only look away for a small number of seconds and then return your focus to the interviewer. If you feel uncomfortable holding eye contact with people, look at the forehead, just above their nose.

Posture

Maintain proper posture throughout the interview. Slouching and leaning down in your chair reflects laziness, lack of interest, and a lack of confidence. Being too rigid and tense will convey inflexibility and nervousness. Be comfortable. Keep your shoulders up and back. Put both of your feet on the floor. It's all right to lean slightly towards the interviewer.

Don't lean on the interviewers' desk

Many people will lean on the desk of the person in front of them. You're invading that person's personal space, and by making them uncomfortable it won't help you leave a good impression.

Remove barriers

Be careful not to create defensive barriers between yourself and the interviewer(s). Don't leave your briefcase on your knees, or keep your arms folded or your legs crossed. It may feel natural to you, but it does create a defensive barrier between you and the interviewer(s).

Gestures

Gestures, such as use of hands, eyebrows, etc., can enhance your message if they are not overdone. Raising your eyebrows at something interesting or exciting and using your hands to express a point and relay a story, all add to your presentation. However, if these things are overdone, they will distract others and take away from your message and the interview.

Don't fidget

Be aware of any nervous habits that you have. Don't tap the desk, play with your hair, bite your fingernails or touch your face constantly. These will be noticed by the interviewer, will serve as distractions and are indications of your low confidence level.

Watch your hands!

If you're the kind of person who likes to gesture with your hands, keep them in check.

Be natural

The more natural that you can appear to be, the better chance you have of creating a good relationship in your interview. Don't stress about all of the things that you're supposed to be doing or not doing. Practice before you go into the interview so that you aren't focusing on your physical mannerisms and missing out on what you're being asked.

Developing rapport

- Notice the tone of voice the interviewer uses. If they are very business like, do not be overly cheerful, but if they have a friendly tone, do be cheerful and enthusiastic.
- Match the pitch, rate and volume. If the interviewer speaks slowly and softly, with a low pitch, don't talk in a loud and rapid manner, you will overwhelm them.

Source: www.amazingpeople.co.uk