

# Effects of Body Language

## Body Posture

### Positive Language

Relaxed posture and breathing, no visible signs of stiffness or abrupt movements. These indicate no major barriers to communication.



### Negative Language

Body tense, stiff, a wrinkled brow, jerky hand motion, or hands clasped in front. These are signs of nervousness that can distract the audience from your speech.



## Arms

### Positive Language

Uncrossed arms and hands open (palms up or otherwise visible to the other person). This is a sign of openness.



### Negative Language

Arms folded in the front or hands on your hips. This can indicate dominance of the speaker over the audience, which can hinder the audience from listening to you.



## Eyes

### Positive Language

Looking around to all parts of the audience and not staring at one particular person. Also, not looking back at your visual aid when talking about it. This lets the audience know that you are interested in them.



### Negative Language

This includes reading from your note cards a lot or glancing up and away from the audience a lot in order to recall parts of your speech. This shows a sign of insecurity and can lower your credibility.



## Demeanor

### Positive Language

Smiling to the audience and/or adding humor to your speech. This signals a warm relationship with your audience, which enhances communication.



### Negative Language

Talking in a monotonous tone and with a lack of facial expression can turn the audience away from your message.



## Proximity

### Positive Language

Reducing the distance between you and your audience indicates an interest in your audience.



### Negative Language

Staying as far away as possible from the audience can create a barrier between you and the audience.



## Gestures

### Positive Language

Talking with your hands, and particularly with palms open shows sincerity.



### Negative Language

Not using your hands is a sign of stiffness, which can create boundaries in communication.



### Combinations Count More Than Individual Gestures

- ✓ Body language is most meaningful when you use several expressions at the same time.
- ✓ Most meaningful is the match between your gestures and what you say at the same time.