

Body language in a job interview



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Communication via body language in a Job Interview

Introduction

Communication is the process by which a message is a coded and sent and which the receiver decodes once received. Communication takes place among all individuals and living beings constantly throughout our lives whether it be intentional or unintentional. When talking about communication, the most common form of communication is perceived to be someone talking to another but this is incorrect. Research shows that only 7% of our communication takes place in a verbal form while out of the remaining 93%, 55% relates to our body language and the remaining 38% is via paralanguage.

This clearly suggests that the non-verbal communication is highly significant and body language plays a key part. The important aspect about body language is that one could communicate a lot through it and still not know what he is communicating and what is being received on the other end

Body Language

There is an old saying which goes “ His actions speak louder than his words”. In this context it is very true. Our body language affects our communication on a daily basis whether it be in our personal lives or in our professional environment. Our thoughts, feelings and emotions are all portrayed through our body language without us realizing it and it could betray our words too. We may speak out differently but our body language would show out to everyone exactly what we are feeling or thinking.

Body language covers a whole wide range of signals. The way we walk, sit and conduct ourselves and the way we gesture our hands and all our facial expressions come under this. Our proximity to others, our contact (eye contact or physical contact) and also the way we dress and appear would communicate a lot to the others about us.

Body language in a job interview

A job interview is an important aspect of everyone’s lives. It is a moment in life which could be the stepping stone of your success or which pulls you back in life. Naturally, it can be quite demanding and stressful and could easily make anyone very nervous. So the way we handle the job interview is very important. While everyone prepares well for a job interview in the form of what they speak, it could be our body language in the end which decides if we get the job or not. There are many important signals which our body gives out during the interview which the interviewer would be looking out for.

- Making a good entrance

It is easy to state that an interview probably starts even before we go to the interview room. The interviewer could watch us initially trying to get a first impression. First impressions are always important. It goes without saying that you need to be dressed up smartly for the interview and also have the right amount of cologne or perfume on you. The way you dress would speak volumes for you. You should also have confidence about you and try not to project any nerves. Having a good smile as you enter would do a lot of good.

Having a steady walk to the interview room by following the person who is leading you instead of trying to lead that person and also having a good handshake would help you tick the right boxes. Your handshake should not be limp but should also not be overly aggressive. It needs to have the right amount of firmness.

- Facial expressions

The facial expressions that one displays is probably as important as any other aspect. Your expressions could betray your true feelings. No matter how well you communicate verbally, your expressions would tell your interviewer if you are nervous or confident or if you are unsure of any facts. Your eyes would speak volumes for you. This is why it is necessary to look the person in the eye when you speak. Sometimes there could be multiple interviewers. In that case it is advisable to give each interviewer a brief eye contact but by giving it more to the interviewer who asked the question. It is an accepted norm that if you are unable to look a person in the eye while speaking you could be lying. But it is also necessary to not stare too hard into the eyes of the interviewer as it would come out rude.

The way your eyebrows raise would tell the interviewer if you have been caught by surprise or if you do not believe in something. This should be limited. While the interviewer may have a poker face with which they give out nothing, the interviewee should try to avoid it. Displaying the right amount of expressions in the form of smiling would help project the right amount of confidence.

- Postures

The way you sit and walk and the way your hands and legs are placed at the time of the interview are also very important. Sitting with your legs crossed would display boredom while sitting hunched and very closed would make it appear if you are not very interested. It is important to sit up straight and lean slightly forward as this would make it appear that you are interested. Also crossing your hands across your chest would make it appear that you are a very closed person who does not like to share much. Having an open position while displaying your chest and stomach areas is the right way to go.

The way you walk is also very important. Try to avoid being hunched and walking slowly with your hands in your pockets and with your eyes fixed on the floor. The right way to project confidence is to look up straight while walking and going about with a good pace with the proper swinging of arms.

- Gestures

The way you move your hands and head while communicating verbally is also important. Unnecessary gestures like rubbing a part of your body or cupping hands over the mouth or having closed fists should be avoided.

Gesturing with your hands while communicating is very good as it would show openness and confidence but too much hand movement should be avoided and raising your hands too high should also be avoided.

Gesturing with your head by nodding while listening and also smiling is good as it would show the interest. Other gestures like glancing away or staring down or even clearing the throat, tapping fingers and frequently shifting around in the chair should be avoided as the interviewer may misinterpret it as signs of disinterest or nervousness.

- Departing from the interview

An important part of an interview is how you finish it. Everyone generally focuses so much on the interview that they tend to forget that finishing an interview and departing from it is also very important. Even if the interview did not go as well as we would like, it is important to stand and leave with a graceful walk and a smile. If possible try to shake hands of the interview as you leave too.

Conclusion

Communicating via body language is very important in the job interview. No matter how well prepared we are and how good our verbal communication was, if our body language is not good it could betray all our feelings and all efforts could be in vain. Therefore, preparing our body language to a job interview is just as much as important as preparing our verbal communication

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