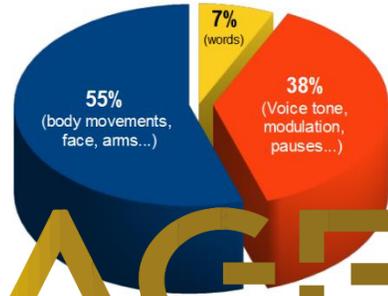


BODY LANGUAGE



Unlock the Power of Your Mind

Chapter X – BODY LANGUAGE

Body language is nonverbal communication consisting of postures, gestures, facial expressions, and eye movements. Body language is two-way process: Your own body language reveals your thoughts and feelings to others; and other people's body language reveals their thoughts and feelings to you. The body language of athletes and coaches is easy to pick up on while watching a sporting event, and it is usually representative of who is winning or losing at the moment. On game day, what is your body language saying? What image do you want to project?

Positive body language

- Positive body language shows that a person is in control and ready for the competition.
- Positive body language can be shown through routines which help them to stay focused and confident. This routine could be performed before preparing to serve in tennis or taking a free shot in basketball.
- In sports, a wrong gesture can demotivate the entire team and can lead to match losses.



Are you feeling intimidated before playing a top-ranked opponent? If so, are you taking a few moments to go through a few simple motions that can improve your readiness?

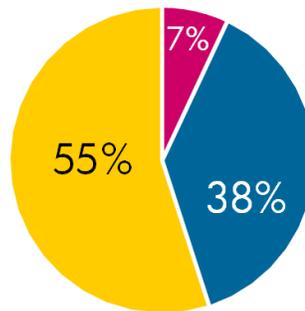
According to recent research by psychologists Dana Carney, Amy Cuddy, and Andy Yap, simply holding one's body in open, expansive (versus closed, counteractive) postures for only a couple of minutes can

produce meaningful elevations in testosterone, decreases in cortisol, an increased feeling of power, and tolerance for risk when it is needed. Thus, high-powered postures can generate powerful responses. As such, looking like a winner will help you play like a winner.

Body language can be positive or negative:

POSITIVE/UPBEAT BODY LANGUAGE

- Smiling
- Chin up
- Shoulders back/chest out
- Standing tall
- Walking strong



Dr. Albert Mehrabian's 7-38-55% Rule

Elements of Personal Communication

- 7% spoken words
- 38% voice, tone
- 55% body language

NEGATIVE /GLUM BODY LANGUAGE

- Frowning
- Shaking your head
- Eyes downcast
- Shoulders hunched
- Dragging your feet

Adopt the pose of a supremely confident athlete for the duration of your practices and games. Acting this way will help you stay in a winning frame of mind, regardless of the score or situation. When you are gassed at practice, stand tall and walk strong. When you are playing an undefeated team, show your swagger.

Are you prone to making I-just-drank-some-expired-milk facial expression or showing negative body language after missing a shot on goal or after a bad run? To perform at a champion's level (and to be a good teammate,) keep a positive demeanor and attitude rather than pouting or moping. Your body language will send the right message to the opposition. You can't be mentally beaten or fazed – no matter what happens

Just smile, you'll feel better. Imagine that one day you are feeling down – perhaps something did not go as well as expected. But there isn't time for exploring your feelings because you have to start mentally preparing for that night's game. How can

Body Language

- If a person shows confidence and energy through body language they are more likely to do well, than a person who is not so confident.
- For example: If a sports person appears confident and ready for the competition their opponent will feel anxious and will not perform optimally which gives the positive sports person an advantage.



you quickly get into a better mood? Perhaps you've heard the expression "Just smile, you'll feel better." Does the act of smiling itself really make you feel better?

Findings from a 1988 study revealed that simply creating a smile by clenching a pen between the teeth will almost immediately make people feel happier about what it is they are doing. So, keep this discovery in mind when you need a quick boost in mood. Do not simply drag a down mood into your performance. Put a big confident smile on your face instead!

Always give your BEST. Here's a handy acronym for giving one's BEST – "Body Language, Eye Contact, Speech, and Tone of Voice." Strive to always give your absolute BEST: body language (strong, not slumped,) eye contact (focused, not wandering,) speech (assertive, not passive,) and tone of voice (self-assured, not soft.) Strive to sharpen these four aspects of your communication further. Working on them at practices will make them automatic in competition.

Dress for success. As a final point, don't overlook your appearance. Wear your uniform with pride. "If you look good, you feel good. And if you feel good, you play good. If you play good, they pay good."

At the end of the day, all sports and competitions are a combination of chance, practice, skill, and competitiveness. While not all of these components are in your control, each performance can be elevated by a strong mental attitude. Techniques to build your mental strength in practice and games include utilizing the BEST routine, valuing your appearance, and putting on a smile to push you past your perceived physical limitations.

