



# Body Language Skills at Work

*Specialist advisor  
Judi James*

*A video resource produced in the  
United Kingdom by Fenman Limited*

## **Getting your message across**

- How to transmit signals that are positive, empathetic and effective
- Create congruence – look as though you mean what you say
- Use perception techniques to re-engineer your own signals

## **Reading body language**

- How to analyse body language in others – recognise and deal with incongruence
- Create empathy with colleagues and clients by matching, mirroring and pacing
- Develop visual perception to 'read between the lines'



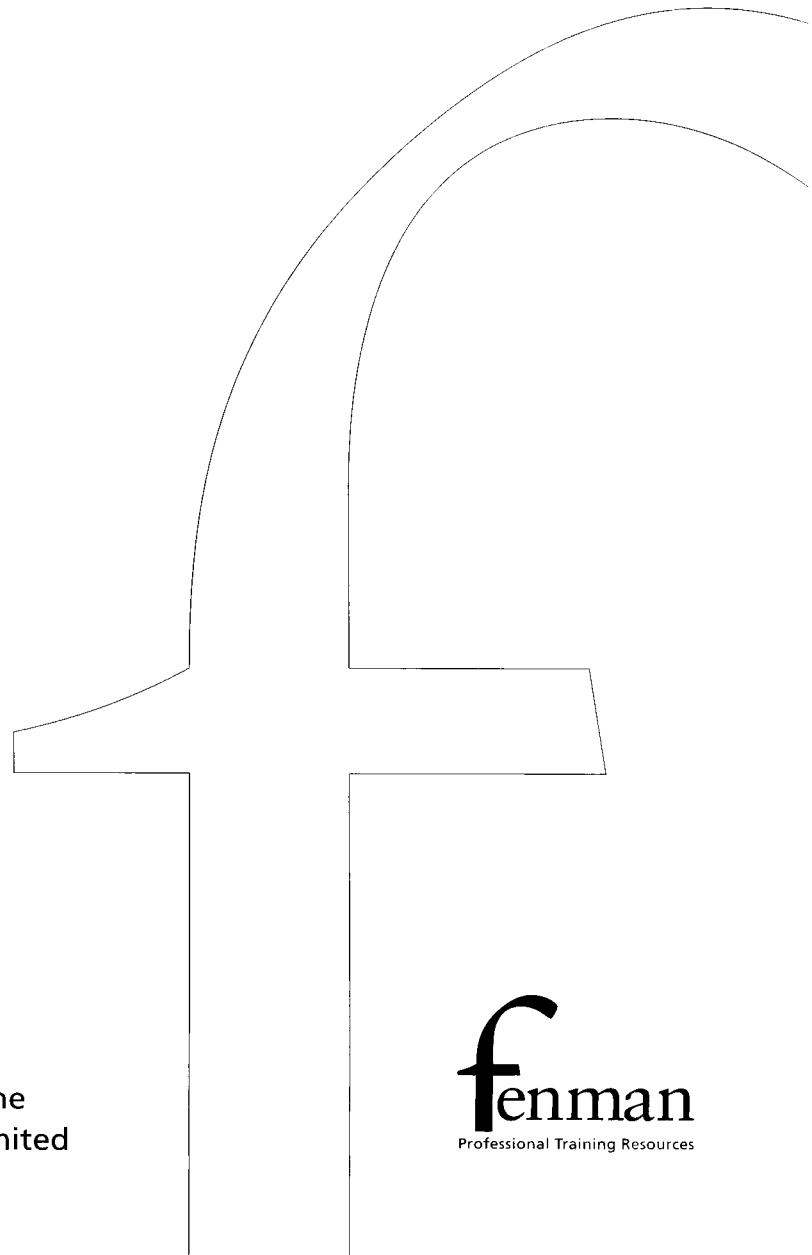




TRAINER'S GUIDE

# Body Language Skills at Work

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Judi James



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Professional Training Resources

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If you have **purchased or hired the complete resource**, but not otherwise, you may photocopy parts of this Trainer's Guide, as indicated by the  icon, for distribution to your employees only. If you are a consultant, you may distribute copies of those parts of this Trainer's Guide indicated by the  icon, to participants who attend courses run by yourself.

**What you must not do, ever, is copy the DVD or the videos.** Firstly, because it is immoral, and secondly, because it is illegal. We do sue people we catch who have made copies of our products without consent and we do catch them, often years after the offence itself.

Theft of copyright material threatens the supply of training materials in future and it threatens the livelihood of people who develop training materials.

Thank you for buying this resource and for respecting our copyright.



## DVD and VHS versions

Fenman Limited has made *Body Language Skills at Work* available in both DVD and VHS versions (two tapes).

The content is the same in each case. DVD offers a number of advantages over VHS.

The advantages include:

- physically more robust
- easier to carry and store
- far superior picture and sound quality
- can be played on DVD player, PC or Mac
- enables the trainer to jump to the exact frame required
- enables the trainer to play scenes in the order of their choice
- can be run in a window on a computer, enabling the user to access word processing and other software at the same time.

We have taken advantage of some of the features of DVD to make your use of the programme easier. On starting the DVD, you will see a menu from which you can choose a number of options, including running the video in the normal way. There are other options included that will enable you to jump to the scenes you require.

If you have purchased the VHS version, but would like to switch to DVD, you can do so at a special rate. Please contact our sales department (telephone +44 (0)1353 665533) for details.

## An introduction to body language

Body language is a fascinating subject and one that can have a direct effect on the success of a company. Despite the onset of the e-mail generation, face-to-face communications are becoming **more**, rather than **less** important, and are no longer the sole responsibility of front-line staff.

**Cultural change:** a massive shift in business culture has meant that staff in all areas of business are being asked to communicate with clients and colleagues at presentations, interviews, business meetings, networking events, customer transactions, appraisals and sales meetings. Everyone is called on to work 'front-line' at some stage, and the success of these keynote communications is vital.

Ask any company what their biggest challenges are and the word 'communication' will emerge on the list, often at the top. We speak, we telephone, we e-mail and we write. But the real impact of any communication comes from the person making it.

Internally, poor communications will be costly in terms of efficiency, staff morale and time lost. Good team spirit, good leadership and good management all depend on an ability to communicate in a way that is effective and inspirational.

Externally, poor communication techniques will lose customers. The 'buy' transaction of a product or service will only occur when the client feels both their physical and emotional needs are satisfied. To put it another way, in a buyer's market it's not just enough that the product or service you are offering is competitive. The customer also has to enjoy the experience of doing business with your company. This is the real 'people' part of the procedure, where the communication process kicks in, with each member of staff becoming an ambassador for the organisation.

**You are the message:** effective communication is about more than just words. The phrase: '**you are the message**' is an important one. Words might define the message, but it is the tone and the body language that convey the sincerity or lack of it.

**Congruent communication:** looking as though you mean what you say comes when the facial expressions, gestures and posture all endorse the verbal



message. When the words are at odds with the non-verbal signals, it's the body language that most people see as telling the truth.

Rudeness and insincerity are two words that can jeopardise any business transaction, as is an inability to judge the customer's moods and true feelings and respond to them. For communication to be truly effective, we need to be aware of both our own body language messages and those of people we deal with.

**Incoming and outgoing signals:** body language isn't just a one-way communication. To create empathy and rapport, staff need to be able to read their 'incoming mail', that is the messages clients and colleagues send out via their own sets of gestures and expressions. Although body language is not a precise science, being visually perceptive can often help us to read between the lines.

Negative body talk isn't always deliberate. Because we only see our own non-verbal communication when we look in a mirror or see ourselves on the screen, we are less aware of our body actions than we are of our words. This makes it hard to judge what we are saying. Shyness or lack of experience can emerge as surliness or disinterest. A bid to be assertive can look like dominance or aggression. Being stressed or over-busy can be seen as impatience or irritation. Even being helpful might translate as being patronising and insincere.

This lack of awareness is disastrous in business, where customer satisfaction can depend on a welcoming smile, attentive eye contact and confident gestures when selling or presenting, or an expression of concern when dealing with a complaint.

Awareness of body language, both our own and other people's, is essential for business success. This programme aims to raise that awareness and help participants to learn more about reading the real communications of colleagues and customers, then transmit signals that are positive, empathetic and effective themselves.

## About the advisor

Author and broadcaster Judi James is one of the UK's leading body language and behaviour experts. For more than 15 years she has been speaking at conferences and running training courses across the country, specialising in areas such as:

- Business Image
- Communication Skills
- Customer Care
- Motivating Skills
- Presentation Skills.

Her best-selling titles include:

*Body Talk: The Skills of Positive Image*, Spiro Press (1995)  
ISBN 1 858351 53 7

*People Talk: The Skills of Positive Communication and Customer Care*,  
Spiro Press (1997)  
ISBN 1 858355 20 6

*BodyTalk at Work: How to Use Effective Body Language to Boost  
your Career*, Piatkus Books (2001)  
ISBN 0 749922 58 3

Judi writes regular body language columns for a number of magazines.





## Summary overview

### How to use this programme

It can be used as:

- The integral part of a short training session on body language, using a trainer or a facilitator.
- An interactive part of a half-day course on body language and communications.
- An inclusion on any course dealing with communication skills.
- Either one or both parts of the programme may be used.

Appropriate existing programmes where this material will be useful include:

- Appraisals
- Coaching and Mentoring
- Communication Skills
- Customer Care
- Dealing with Complaint, Hassle and Conflict
- Interpersonal Skills
- Interviewing Skills
- Management Skills
- Meetings Skills
- Negotiation Skills
- Persuading and Influencing
- Presentation Skills
- Reception or Front-line Training
- Sales Skills
- Train the Trainer.

## **Who is this programme for?**

It is for:

- Professional trainers and consultants.
- Anyone with responsibility or a need to develop their staff. No prior training or qualifications are necessary and, if preferred, the facilitator can learn along with the participants.
- The programme is broad in scope, with advice, tips and illustrations for both front-line and internal staff, up to senior management level.

## **What does this programme do?**

It helps:

- To create an awareness of the impact of body language in workplace transactions.
- Participants to tailor their own body language to create more successful transactions.
- To make them aware of the body language signals of clients and colleagues, enhancing their visual 'listening' skills, thereby helping them to create empathy and understanding.

Using carefully chosen scenarios, it aims to work on the following areas:

### Front-line

- enhancing customer care skills for front-line staff
- developing the skills of acknowledging, meeting, greeting and welcoming
- showing how to create instant empathy and rapport with clients
- showing how to display listening skills
- showing how to deal with complaints and difficult transactions.

### Key performance

- adding impact to business presentations
- making sales pitches more successful
- speaking up at meetings and getting the point across.

### Management

- making interviews more meaningful and successful
- adding value to coaching and training sessions by honing the trainer's non-verbal communications, raising impact and making messages at least 50 per cent more effective
- giving appraisals that are effective.

## **Why is this programme necessary?**

Because:

- Up to 55 per cent of face-to-face communication is created by body language.
- Body language is a vital component of the customer process.
- It can make or break a business presentation, training session, boardroom meeting or sales visit.
- Being receptive to other people's body language is important for effective interviews, appraisals and coaching sessions.
- Actions really do speak louder than words!

## **How does the programme achieve the objectives?**

By:

- Illustrating a series of 'real' workplace scenarios where body language is a vital factor.
- Using a cross-section of scenarios for identification with the largest possible group.

- Showing 'good' and 'bad' body language traits in a natural way, so that everyone can identify the common turn-offs and turn-ons.
- Using an upbeat, discussion style of commentary to create awareness, rather than being too prescriptive.
- Using a format where, by joining in such discussion, participants can personally identify with the images on screen, understand how to use their own body language and observe other people's body language to good effect.
- Illustrating useful and practical learning points which are applicable to people in all organisations.

### **Where can the programme be used?**

- In an office or training room.
- In a management training centre.

### **How long does the programme take?**

It can be run either as a short session or as a half-day programme. Both options are given in this Trainer's Guide. The short session will last about 1 hour 25 minutes or 1 hour 45 minutes, depending on whether you use one part or both parts of the programme.

### **What you will find in this resource**

This resource contains two VHS videos or a DVD and this Trainer's Guide. The handouts at the back of the Guide may be photocopied and distributed to participants (please see Copyright – what you can and cannot do, on page 5 before doing so).

The videos or the DVD must be used in conjunction with the written material in this Trainer's Guide. If you simply load the videos or the DVD, press play

and sit back, it will not make sense. We recommend you only use the videos or the DVD once you have read the appropriate parts of this Trainer's Guide.

The Trainer's Guide contains the following:

- an overview of the programme
- two detailed session plans for running a short (1 hour 25minute or 1hour 45 minute) session and a half-day session
- detailed facilitation notes for the trainer on the video sequences
- role-play masters
- participants' handout masters
- trainers' briefs.



## Structure of the programme

The programme is divided into two parts, each on a separate videotape; the two parts can either be viewed separately, or in conjunction with each other. Part 1 is entitled *Getting your message across* and focuses on the signals we send out to others and how we can improve these; Part 2: *Reading body language* deals with interpreting others' body language, spotting signs of incongruence and how to make their body language work for us.

The two parts of the programme contain a number of key scenes which are being watched and analysed in a film editing suite by a presenter (Adrian Dickson) and a body language expert (Judi James).

### Content of the videos and the DVD

#### Part 1: Getting your message across

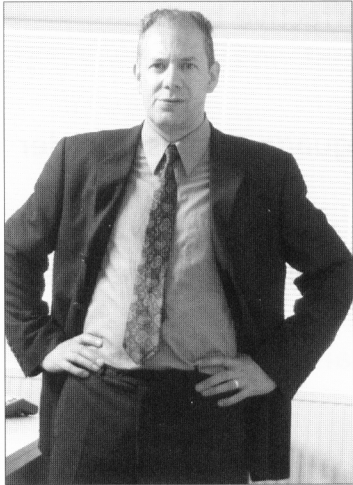
- Introduction
- The manager and his style of management – in reception and in a sales meeting
- Receptionist skills
- Body language examples – good and bad
- Defusing conflict – with a dissatisfied colleague and with a dissatisfied team
- A business presentation
- Summary.

#### Part 2: Reading body language

- Introduction
- An appraisal
- A disciplinary meeting
- A recruitment interview
- An interdepartmental meeting
- A sales meeting
- Summary.

## Main characters

Here are the two main characters:



Michael Urquhart

Michael is in his late thirties and the Managing Director of a major furniture manufacturing company. He is responsible for a large and diverse workforce and has a busy work schedule. Improving his body language is rather a revelation to him, but he is prepared to work at it to achieve results.



Carole Bailey

Carole is in her mid-thirties and a Training and Development Advisor in an NHS Hospital Trust. She has a background in nursing and, together with a small team, co-ordinates training projects. She exudes an air of confidence and is able to use body language to good advantage in her daily work.

## **The short training session**

### **Objectives**

- To help participants understand the importance of effective body language in their everyday transactions.
- To help them hone and improve their own body language signals in order to make those transactions effective.
- To show them how to read other people's body language more effectively.

The short session can bring about behavioural change and help overall awareness.

### **Number of participants**

This short session is ideal for larger groups where a basic introduction to the general effect of body language at work is important.

### **Participants' background**

The programme is useful at all levels in all types of work. Scenarios shown are a cross-section, and the techniques portrayed will be useful to everyone.

### **Resources required**

- VCR for videos, DVD player or computer with DVD drive for DVD version
- A flipchart pad and stand or a whiteboard
- Marker pens
- Paper and pens for participants
- Photocopies of Handouts 1, 2, 3 and 7 from the back of this Trainer's Guide.

## Session plan

Activity	Duration
Introduction	5 minutes
How long does it take to make a first impression?	5 minutes
First impressions	5 minutes
Fight or flight	5 minutes
Impact	5 minutes
How body language affects work	10 minutes
Show both videos or the DVD	45 minutes
Feedback and discussion	5 minutes
Think – feel – behave	5 minutes
Learning points	5 minutes
Quiz	5 minutes
Action plans	5 minutes
<b>Total time</b>	<b>1 hour 45 minutes*</b>

\* 1 hour 25 minutes if you show only one video

### Introduction

Introduce the session, explain that the aims and objectives are to:

- Help participants understand the importance of effective body language in their everyday transactions.
- Help them hone and improve their own body language in order to make those transactions effective.
- Show them how to read other people's body language signals more effectively.

## **How long does it take to make a first impression?**

Ask participants how long they think it takes to make a first impression. The answer is about three to four seconds but it may be appropriate to open this for discussion. Make the point that first impressions are often misleading, and it is better just to be 'yourself', rather than try to put on an act. This programme endorses the fact that our first impressions are often based on prejudice and assumption. Feel free to agree with that, in principle. In business, however, we rarely get a second chance if that first impression was negative. Explain how, in our jobs, we don't just create that image on behalf of ourselves; we speak for the entire organisation, acting as its ambassador in every transaction.

Tell them you realise that always 'being yourself' is a tall order at work. It implies you should not be careful or tactful in your verbal and non-verbal communications, or tailor your approach to suit your audience. This would mean speaking your mind at all times, saying exactly what you are thinking. It's important that we modify our verbal communications to be polite, thoughtful and positive, so why not do the same with the unspoken dialogues?

If the group needs further proof, ask them to give examples of times when they have been on the receiving end of somebody's negative body language. Did they feel that person was just 'being themselves'? And how can we be ourselves in key business transactions that are not normal processes in our everyday private lives, for example, during a business presentation or business meeting?

Aim to spend about 5 minutes on this.

## **First impressions**

Ask participants what they think creates a first impression. What do we look at when we first see someone? What is it about them that speaks before words have been exchanged? List the replies on a sheet of flipchart paper, keeping in mind that the following should be included (by you, if necessary):

- gaze, eye contact
- facial expression
- posture and stance
- gestures

- spatial behaviour (how close we stand)
- touch
- grooming
- dress.

## Distribute Handout 1

When the list is complete, distribute Handout 1 First impressions, for reference.

This section will take approximately 5 minutes.

### Fight or flight

Go on to explain why, even though we may be aware that the first impression is a flawed assessment process, we will always continue to judge one another visually. It is an **instinctive** process, used to determine primarily whether a stranger is a threat or danger to us, and to decide on the need for fight or flight. We begin to make the judgment the moment we first see them, well before they have begun to communicate verbally.

Emphasise the point that, if we get that first impression wrong, we create what will be a lasting poor image of both ourselves and the organisation we work for.

Ask them to think about a time when somebody created a bad visual first impression on them – what exactly did they do? If it was a customer transaction, ask how it made them feel about the company that person represented. If the feedback is slow, help them by suggesting scenarios such as transport staff, shop assistants, bank workers, and so on.

Suggest signals of rudeness, such as not listening, or being ignored, and so on. Then ask for some feedback of good first impressions, and how they happened.

Write the key points on a sheet of flipchart paper.

Allow about 5 minutes for this exercise.



### **Trainer's note**

*There are no real right or wrong answers at this stage, as the learning point is all about perception, so if they perceived the behaviour to be rude then it was. However, the sort of responses you should expect are:*

- **Rudeness**
  - *no eye contact*
  - *staring*
  - *getting too close*
  - *pointing*
  - *sighing*
  - *ignoring*
  - *no smile*
  - *over-smiling (being patronised)*
  - *narrowed eyes*
  - *lumped posture*
  - *tapping.*
  
- **Good behaviour**
  - *smiling*
  - *eye contact*
  - *open gestures*
  - *leaning forward*
  - *handshake*
  - *nodding*
  - *listening signals.*

### **Impact**

Write three key words on a sheet of flipchart paper:

- VISUAL (body language, dress, grooming)
  
- VERBAL (words)
  
- VOCAL (tone of voice).

Explain that, while words are important, they are also very low-impact. Illustrate this by saying a phrase without using body language and with a very toneless voice, for example, 'The building's on fire and we must all escape at once'. Ask whether they think this would clear the room.

Vocal tone adds meaning, but it's the body language signals that give the real impact. Effective communication needs to be congruent, which means we need to look as though we mean what we say. When our words, tone and non-verbal signals match up, people believe what we say. When they don't, people will usually look to the visual signals to decipher the real truth behind our words.

Illustrate this point by saying the phrase: 'Have a nice day', but in a bored tone, using disinterested body language. Then ask how they feel when they ask a colleague how they are and they say 'fine', but with a miserable face and slumped posture. These are examples of incongruent communication. Which would they believe, the words or the visual signals?

This section will take about 5 minutes.

### **How body language affects work**

Divide the participants into groups of up to ten and give each group a supply of flipchart paper and marker pens. Ask each group to discuss where and how they use body language in their own jobs. Ask them to make up lists on a sheet of flipchart paper under two headings: **Outgoing signals** and **Incoming signals**. That is, what body language they use themselves and how they use the skill of reading that of other people.

Allow about 10 minutes for this work.

### **Show the videos or the DVD**

Use the Facilitation notes (page 39) to assist you in eliciting the main points from the scenes. If using the DVD, use the 'play whole video' option from the main menu. Stop the action at three key points as highlighted in the Facilitation notes: select two instances where 'bad' body language has been used (for example, from the scenes in Part 1 with Michael in reception and in

a sales meeting) and one instance of a character using appropriate body language to good effect (for example, Carole in the later stages of her meeting with a dissatisfied colleague). Suggestions for questions you could ask are given on page 55.

Should you choose to show only one video at this point, the time will be reduced from 45 minutes to approximately 25 minutes.

### **Feedback and discussion**

This is a facilitated session which leads participants to relate what they have seen that is relevant to their own behaviour at work. The Facilitation notes (page 39) of this Trainer's Guide will be helpful for this session.

### **Think – feel – behave**

#### **Distribute Handout 2**

Distribute Handout 2 Think – feel – behave, at this point. Ask participants to consider how they feel their thoughts can become feelings which are then transformed into action, that is, into body language.

Draw a large triangle on a sheet of flipchart paper, with the words: THINK, FEEL, BEHAVE (one word at each point). Refer to this when discussing the handout. The point you are making with this handout is that our thoughts and feelings might be known only to us, but they can emerge as actions and body language. Body language improvement will be helped by first working on inner thoughts and feelings. It can be difficult to project a positive image to a customer if we are feeling anxious and negative.

However, also make the point that, by changing our physical state, for example, standing tall and smiling, we can also help change our thoughts and inner feelings. Each one of the three – thinking, feeling and behaving – will have a direct positive or negative effect on the other two.

Allow about 5 minutes for this work.

## Learning points

Following this, ask them for their key learning points from the session. You can expect the following responses:

- The impact of the first impression.
- What they think they 'say' to clients and/or colleagues within those first few seconds.
- What they actually do to make their body language effective. Separate the 'I am' and 'I think' from the 'what I do'. Explain that our thoughts and feelings are known only to ourselves. It's the actions and words that speak to other people.

Ask for specific body language actions that they employ, for example, eye contact, leaning forward, using open gestures, smiling with the eyes, and so on.

Leave them about 5 minutes to come up with these ideas.

## Quiz

### **Distribute Handout 3**

Distribute Handout 3 Quiz. Allow a few quiet moments to complete it, either individually, or in small syndicates, with discussion. Facilitate using the answers which you will find on Trainer's brief 1 on page 76 of this Trainer's Guide.

This exercise will take about 5 minutes.

## Action plans

### **Distribute Handout 7**

Distribute Handout 7 Action plan. This is a quiet, thinking session where everyone writes action plans, listing any current behaviour that they intend to change, followed by some quick feedback, with participants sharing three key points with the rest of the group.

# The half-day training session

## Objectives

- To increase participants' awareness of the role of body language in their jobs.
- To help them enhance their own skills, by watching, analysing and then practising.
- To help them become more perceptive to the non-verbal communications of people they deal with at work.
- To learn to be more effective in specific workplace scenarios, such as reception, over-the-counter, business presentations, and so on.

## Number of participants

Between six and twelve.

## Participants' background

A cross-section of workplace scenarios are used in the video clips, so participants from any department should find the training useful.

## Resources required

- A large room
- VCR for videos, DVD player or computer with DVD drive for DVD version
- A flipchart pad and stand or a whiteboard
- Marker pens
- Paper and pens for participants
- Photocopies of all the handouts from the back of this Trainer's Guide
- Tables or desks for role-play.



## Session plan

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Duration</b>
Introduction	5 minutes
How long does it take to make a first impression?	5 minutes
Impact	5 minutes
How does non-verbal signalling work?	5 minutes
First impressions: what do I say about myself?	30 minutes
Think – feel – behave	5 minutes
How body language affects work	10 minutes
Show both videos or the DVD	45 minutes
<b>Break</b>	<b>10 minutes</b>
Quiz	15 minutes
Feedback and discussion	10 minutes
Role-plays	35 minutes
Action plans	10 minutes
<b>Total time</b>	<b>3 hours 10 minutes</b>

### Introduction

Introduce the session by explaining the objectives:

- To increase participants' awareness of the role of body language in their jobs.
- To help them enhance their own skills, by watching, analysing and then practising.
- To help them become more perceptive to the non-verbal communications of people they deal with at work.

- To learn to be more effective in specific workplace scenarios, such as reception, over-the-counter dealings, business presentations, and so on.

### **How long does it take to make a first impression?**

Ask the participants how long they think it takes to make a first impression. Tell them it usually takes between three to four seconds, but this is open to discussion. Emphasise how much of that impression is created before we open our mouths.

Ask them to think about what it is that creates the visual first impression. What do we look at when we first see someone? How do we begin to gauge what they are like? List the replies on a sheet of flipchart paper, keeping in mind that the following should be included (by you, if necessary):

- gaze, eye contact
- facial expression
- posture and stance
- gestures
- spatial behaviour (how close we stand)
- touch
- grooming
- dress.

### **Distribute Handout 1**

When the list is complete, give out Handout 1 First impressions.

This work will take approximately 5 minutes.

### **Impact**

Write these three key words on a sheet of flipchart paper:

VISUAL (body language, dress, grooming)

VERBAL (words)

## VOCAL (tone of voice).

Explain that, while words are important, they are also very low-impact. Illustrate this by saying a phrase without using body language and with a very toneless voice, for example, 'The building's on fire and we must all escape at once'. Ask whether they think this would clear the room. Vocal tone adds meaning, but it's the body language that gives the real impact.

Effective communication needs to be congruent, that is, we need to look as though we mean what we say. When our words, tone and non-verbal signals match up, people believe what we say. When they don't match, people will usually look to the visual signals to decipher the real truth behind our words. Illustrate this by saying the phrase 'Have a nice day', but in a bored tone, using disinterested body language. Then ask how they feel when they ask a colleague how they are and the colleague says 'fine', but with a miserable face and slumped posture. These are examples of incongruent communication. Which would they believe, the words or the visual signals?

Allow about 5 minutes for this section.

## How does non-verbal signalling work?

Write three words on a sheet of flipchart paper:

ACTION

ASSIMILATION

RESPONSE.

Explain that these are the three stages of body language communication.

**Action:** this is the gesture or facial expression that we, our colleague or client, uses. This is the factual part of the communication, for example, 'I folded my arms', or 'he rubbed the back of his neck'.

**Assimilation:** this is the stage where the 'listener' tries, consciously or subconsciously, to interpret the action, for example, 'She folded her arms, so

I thought she was angry' or 'he rubbed the back of his neck, so I assumed he was stuck for an answer to my question'.

**Response:** this is the listener's response to the person or their message, based on the assimilation, for example, 'She looked angry with me, so I didn't like her' or 'he looked stuck for an answer so I thought he was inexperienced'.

**Explain that the only factual part of the process is stage one – action.** Tell them that understanding this is vital. When they send out their own body language signals they should try to get stage one right. Get it wrong and this can, possibly mistakenly, create a negative image that they'll have to struggle to change.

However, stress that, when we are reading the body language of others, we need to be open-minded. We should never assume. If our impression has been negative, we should take it back to stage one. We can avoid prejudice or stereotype by asking ourselves 'Why did they make that impression on me?'. 'Could there have been any other reasons behind that gesture?'. If we remain open-minded we will create the climate for better understanding of the people with whom we do business.

This section will take about 5 minutes.

### **First impressions: what do I say about myself?**

Ask each delegate to introduce themselves to the group and give a brief talk about their role at work. They should speak standing up, possibly even from the front of the room. While they speak, ask the other participants to make a mental note of their impression of each person, what they thought about their image and personality, and why. Ask them to feed back three points to the person who spoke, giving brief reasons for the assessment.

If participants already know one another well, ask them to evaluate the speaker as though they were meeting them for the first time.

### **Trainer's note**

*Some groups find it hard to identify and be specific about what it was that created the impression. Encourage them to pinpoint exactly why they came to their conclusions and what was the visual 'evidence' in each case. They may try to tell you they just 'thought' that, but push them to think harder. The response you are looking for will be along these lines:*

- 'I thought Peter was nervous.'*
- 'I thought this because he kept wringing his hands and his speech speeded up.'*

*or:*

- 'I thought Sarah looked confident.'*
- 'I thought this because she used eye contact with the entire group and smiled as she spoke.'*

### **Eliciting feedback from the participants**

The objective of this interactive session is to enable participants to hear feedback on how they come across to others, and to identify the process they use when analysing other people.

Ask the speakers how they felt while they were talking. Did they feel nervous or confident? And did those positive or negative thoughts and feelings impact on their body language at all?

Obviously, the actual time needed for this exercise will depend on your participants; 30 minutes has been allowed for this in the session plan.

Think – feel – behave

## Distribute Handout 2

Distribute Handout 2 Think – feel – behave at this point. Ask the participants to consider how they think their thoughts can become feelings and then action, that is, body language.

Draw a large triangle on a sheet of flipchart paper, with the words: THINK, FEEL, BEHAVE (one word at each point). Refer to this when discussing the handout. The point you are making with this handout is that our thoughts and feelings might be known only to us, but they can emerge as actions and body language. Body language improvement will be helped by first working on inner thoughts and feelings. It can be difficult to project a positive image to a customer if we're feeling anxious and negative.

However, also make the point that, by changing our physical state, for example, standing tall and smiling, we can also help change our thoughts and inner feelings. Each one of the three – thinking, feeling and behaving – will have a direct positive or negative effect on the other two.

Allow about 5 minutes for this work.

### How body language affects work

This is a syndicate exercise for groups of up to ten. Give each group a supply of flipchart paper and marker pens. Ask each group to discuss where and how they use body language in their own jobs. Ask them to make lists on a sheet of flipchart paper under two headings: **Outgoing signals** and **Incoming signals**, noting what body language they use themselves and how they use the skill of reading others.

With input from each group, compile an image 'wish-list' on a flipchart sheet, listing the qualities participants would like to show in their job.



Explain that image objectives like these are important in every business scenario. Making changes to our body language is of little use if we haven't planned these objective first. Use the analogy of reading a map to work out a route without first planning the final destination.

In every workplace scenario, our first thought before changing our techniques should be 'How do I want to be perceived? How do I want to come across? What do I want to say about myself?'

### **Show the videos or the DVD**

Use the Facilitation notes (page 39) to assist you in eliciting the main points from the scenes. If using the DVD, use the 'play whole video' option from the main menu. Be ready to stop the action at the key points highlighted in the Facilitation notes. Select key moments where 'bad' body language has been used in each scenario, eliciting your participants' reactions and also listening (and perhaps discussing!) the comments from the presenter and the expert. Suggestions for questions you could ask are given on page 55.

Ask the participants to feed back their own perceptions of what went wrong and why. Allow comment on other aspects of communication, but try to lead this back to body language points. Ask whether they spotted any incongruent signals, where the words of the characters on screen did not match their non-verbal signals.

Ask the participants to suggest improvements, as though they were coaching the people on screen. Play the feedback from the expert and see how the suggestions compare.

Point out that there is very little about body language that is prescriptive. Everybody sees things differently. When commenting about body language there are many different views of 'right' and 'wrong' things to do.

### ***Trainer's note***

*The Facilitation notes on page 39 of this Trainer's Guide provide extra guidance for discussions or exercises.*

## Break

It is a good idea to schedule a short break at this point or between the two parts of the programme.

## Quiz

### **Distribute Handout 3**

Tell participants they are now going to have a quiz. Divide them into groups of three or four and distribute Handout 3 Quiz. The answers are provided on Trainer's brief 1 on page 76 of this Trainer's Guide; use these to steer or endorse their points.

Ask them, using sheets of flipchart paper, to list the body language gestures and expressions that reveal the following positives and negatives at work:

- confidence
- smugness
- alert listening
- boredom
- shyness
- stress
- welcoming
- stand-offishness
- anger/aggression
- sarcasm
- patronising
- friendliness.

When they have finished, pin the lists on the walls around the room and ask them to compare comments.

Allow about 15 minutes for this exercise.

## Feedback and discussion

This is a facilitated session, leading participants to relate what they have noted from the previous exercise to their own behaviour at work.

### **Distribute Handout 4 or 5**

Distribute Handout 4 Manager's assessment of body language signals, or Handout 5 Front-line staff's assessment of body language signals, depending on the group. Managers should have Handout 4 and front-line staff Handout 5.

Divide participants into new small groups. Have a group discussion followed by a plenary session to voice their answers. Follow this by discussing the answers from either Trainer's brief 2 or 3, on pages 78 or 79.

This exercise will take about 10 minutes.

## Role-plays

These should be as 'real-life' as possible, so they are best compiled by you. If you have hands-on experience of participants' jobs, then you can create a few specific scenarios. Alternatively, approach the heads of department and ask for ideas, or enlist the help of the participants themselves. Try to create a cross-section of scenarios, rather than working on one theme.

Failing this, at the back of this Trainer's Guide there are some suggested role-plays which can be photocopied and distributed to participants.

### **Distribute Handout 6**

Before starting the role-play exercise, distribute Handout 6 Assessment/feedback sheets, to all the participants. This will help them to provide structured evaluation and feedback.

Make sure that everybody who is watching has a copy of Handout 6 and remind them of the key points from the programme.

You can take a role yourself, or you can ask other participants with real-life experience in the role-played scenes to join in.

If some people feel awkward about taking part, you could use the 'tag-wrestling' technique of putting one in the hot seat, then inviting others to swap when the going gets difficult!

Role-plays are vital for body language training. Remind them that watching and listening might provide knowledge, but actually doing it for themselves promotes understanding.

The amount of time you take will depend on your participants; 35 minutes has been allowed for this in the session plan.

### **Tips for running role-plays**

- If possible, move the participants to another room, or to another part of the room in which you are working.
- Ideally, you need a table or desk in the centre of the room, with the group sitting round it in a horseshoe formation.
- Make it clear to the group that you will be asking for feedback from them after the role-play; in particular, you will be asking them to describe the body language signals they noticed, and the effect these had on what happened.
- Allocate the role-plays yourself. Each one can take as little as 5 minutes, but it might help to allow some to run on longer if the action is flowing and some useful points are being illustrated. It's better to do a few scenes energetically and meaningfully rather than to plough through them all in rote. You can, of course, repeat any of the role-play scenes with another delegate.
- It's a good idea to pick your own role-play delegate for each scene, giving them the role-play handout to read quietly first.
- You should take the other role yourself, as directed on the role-play handouts, or enlist the help of another trainer. If you prefer, though, delegates could take both roles. Act out the scene, encouraging the delegate to be serious about their role, and stopping and re-starting if

they stop to laugh or crack jokes. It is important that you don't join in the joking yourself. Often it is a sign of nerves, but it has a negative effect on the usefulness of the exercise. Be insistent and stay 'in character'!

### **Alternative role-plays**

If you are working with younger, less experienced staff, you could divide them into pairs and let them role-play together, all at the same time. When the room is busy like this, they feel less embarrassed and inhibited about their own performance than when they are under the spotlight with the rest of the participants watching. Alternatively, you can break them into groups of three, one person acting as the observer, giving feedback to the other two when they have finished.

If you are working with front-line staff, then you should ensure that the first three set role-play scenarios are watched by all, as their jobs are so high-profile.

Managers may need pre-prepared work, especially if they are working on presentation skills. Prior to the course, alert them to the fact that they will need to bring with them a very brief business presentation, lasting no longer than 5 minutes.

On the role-play sheets at the back of this Trainer's Guide there are notes for each role. You may want to take the role of the customer or staff member marked with an asterisk yourself, or you may prefer to enlist another participant. If you are taking the role yourself, ensure the participant is not aware of your brief. If both roles are being played by participants, it is important neither knows the other's brief.

### **Action plans**

#### **Distribute Handout 7**

At the end of the role-play session, close the programme by distributing Handout 7 Action plan. Allow a few quiet moments for participants to fill them in, then ask for feedback. What will they change? And why?

Allow about 10 minutes for this.

# Facilitation notes

These are notes provided for your use when running the sessions. They will give valuable guidance during discussions or exercise sessions.

## Analysis of key scenes

If you haven't had a great deal of experience in training on the subject of body language, these notes will help you to emphasise certain learning points. You may well feel you need to add some of your own observations to those given here.

### Part 1: Getting your message across

Words are not enough! It is all too easy for our gestures, facial expressions and reactions to undermine or belie what we say. For our words to be meaningful, the accompanying body language must support them and reflect their meaning.

#### **The manager and his style of management – in reception and in a sales meeting**

The point of these two scenes is to illustrate how easy it is to create a misleading and negative impression with clients and staff as a result of 'bad' body language techniques. Michael is a nice enough guy – when you get to know him! Unfortunately though, neither the client in reception nor the two salesmen in the meeting get a chance to see behind the first impression. All they see is an arrogant, overbearing boss bullying his workforce!

#### **Michael in reception**

Michael creates a negative impression with the client in reception (as he does later with his sales team). His biggest problem is using aggressive gestures that intimidate other people. These include:

- pacing
- staring
- frowning
- pointing
- leaning over the chair
- invading their space
- standing while the others sit.

We judge other people by what are called **cluster signals**. These are the full range of expressions and movements that they are using. We very quickly

evaluate their overall character, mood or thoughts by weighing up one signal against another and coming to a conclusion. Initially, in the reception scene, Michael's overall demeanour would appear to be aggressive. However, at the last minute he offers up a **denial gesture**, by winking at a member of staff. This is intended to display the fact that he didn't mean it when he acted out his aggression.

**Denial signals** can be used at any time during a transaction, sometimes consciously, sometimes subconsciously. Michael's denial signal was conscious. He wanted to show he was only joking after all. An example of subconscious denial gesturing could be a nervous salesperson telling a client the product was good, and then shrugging or pulling down the sides of the mouth at the last minute, suggesting they weren't sure that the information was valid.

**Congruence** is an important factor when evaluating the sincerity of non-verbal signals. Michael consciously created his own incongruence by joking his way out of potential conflict. By giving a wink he was taking the sting out of his small rant. Congruence comes when our words, tone and non-verbal messages all match up.

#### **Key points from Michael's scene in reception**

- Cluster signals.
- Denial gestures.
- Congruent communication.
- The difference between how we **feel** and how we **behave**.

Michael's interview to camera shows that he is busy and stressed. He blames being under pressure for 'appearing sharp with my people', but a manager should always appear professional. Making excuses doesn't make Michael a better manager. To get the best out of people and to create the most professional image, we all need to learn how to **mask** negative emotions.

**Masking** is exactly what it says. In business we can't wear an honest face all the time. Impatience, aggression, boredom, dislike, lack of confidence and intolerance are all examples of emotions we need to learn to **mask** in order to be tactful and avoid confrontation.



### **Michael at a sales meeting**

Michael is still displaying a range of aggressive gestures, including:

- circling
- pacing
- leaning over the staff.

All these are threatening. He fails to create empathy with his staff by:

- turning away
- glancing fleetingly away.

These gestures signal his disinterest in other people's views or communications. By cutting himself off in this way, he appears opinionated and inflexible.

### **Summary of key learning points from these scenes**

- Your body language will speak, even when you are silent.
- Many of your signals are subconscious – even you may not be aware of what you are saying to others.
- People react to what they see – often they won't understand your underlying intentions.
- Avoid aggressive, confrontational gestures (for example, pointing), pacing, standing while others sit, staring, frowning, leaning over people and invading their space.
- Study your own non-verbal signals and see what messages they send out to others.

### **Receptionist skills**

#### **Carole in reception**

The point of this scene is to illustrate correct and incorrect body language behaviour on a busy reception desk. The young receptionist isn't overtly

rude, and believes she is trying to help, but the more experienced receptionist illustrates how to deal with clients who, like Carole, are kept waiting, or who are anxious.

The younger receptionist, Louise, is dealing with a foreign client. The mistakes she makes are:

- not acknowledging people waiting
- looking distracted and impatient
- pointing
- staring
- not smiling
- being too busy with the telephone
- using a palm-to-face gesture
- face-rubbing.

Her body language signals also display aggression and disinterest. She shows:

aggression by

- pointing
- leaning close (entering space and invading territory)
- silencing him by thrusting her palm into his face as she answers the telephone
- not smiling.

and disinterest by:

- turning away
- carrying on shuffling her paperwork
- little eye contact
- no mirroring.

The senior receptionist takes a different approach. By acknowledging the people waiting with eye contact and a nod, and giving a positive greeting with a smile, she creates empathy and restores an atmosphere of respect, rather than conflict.

**Mirroring** is a technique we use to create empathy with people. We copy their body movement slightly to get on the same wavelength. This technique is also known as **matching**. When we are with people we like or feel close to, we subconsciously mirror their movements or expressions. When we want to

create the same feelings in a professional situation, we can use the same technique as a tool. We can also **match** the other person's mood and pace of movement. This will help to create an instant bond with a stranger.

**Pacing and leading** is taking the same technique one step further. If we want to change the other person's state, for example, if they are nervous and using very formal, closed body language and we want to reassure them and get them to relax a little, we can begin by adopting a similar 'feel' to our own gestures. By making our own signals slightly more formal and closed we will create empathy by mirroring. Then we take the lead by slowly adopting a more relaxed look, with more open gestures. It's important to get the pace right, we mustn't rush it, and then we should achieve the effect of relaxing the other person and getting them to open up as well.

#### **Summary of key learning points from this scene**

- Acknowledge your customers immediately (with a nod, a smile, a gesture).
- Use eye contact to show you are listening.
- Smile, and use a sympathetic facial expression, if necessary.
- Use open gestures to look welcoming.
- If possible, avoid the barrier of the desk.
- Be polite and warm at all times.

#### **Body language examples – good and bad**

These are explained on the video and are included as distinct examples of both good and bad practice with which participants should be able to identify.

If you turn the sound down, the sequences could be used as a quiz to test your group's knowledge and reactions to body language signals.

## **Defusing conflict – with a dissatisfied colleague and with a dissatisfied team**

The point of these scenes is to illustrate how to handle and defuse potential conflict or disagreement. Carole learns how to handle a complaint from a client, while Michael deals with trouble brewing on the shop floor.

### **Carole with a dissatisfied colleague**

Carole's meeting with a colleague gets off to a bad start. Carole's initial problems are:

- just pitching up and smiling at the woman, hoping to win her over
- showing her into a cramped room that hasn't been prepared
- carrying folders and papers as a barrier
- looking unprepared and unsure of herself.

The client responds by using:

- closed gestures, folding her arms as a barrier
- sitting turned away in her seat.

Carole defuses the situation by:

- admitting that the meeting has got off to a bad start
- apologising
- taking responsibility
- expressing a hope that problems will not recur.

### **Key points from Carole's meeting**

- Always prepare, have a room ready.
- Keep your distance, don't crowd people; this can seem threatening.
- Use an 'announcement' gesture when you shake hands. Hold your hand out from a distance to prepare the other person, use eye contact and smile.
- Allow your eyes to show concern when listening to a complaint.
- Create empathy by mirroring slightly, but revert to open, palm-up gestures when apologising.
- Give undivided attention.

### **Michael with a dissatisfied team**

Michael is dealing with a problem on the shop floor. There are three employees waiting to see him. Their body language displays potential conflict. This is illustrated by:

the big man – arms folded, chin down, standing, watching Michael from under his eyebrows

the young man – legs up on table, tapping

the man in the middle – poised to escape!

### **Key points from Michael's meeting**

Michael again shows lack of empathy by failing to observe his staff and read their feelings.

- He begins badly, by appearing to ignore their feelings.
- He uses a throw-away, denial gesture by raising his eyebrows at the end of his sentence.
- He begins to turn the situation around when he starts to 'listen' with his eyes.
- He breaks the tension by offering coffee.
- He uses a palm-up, open-armed gesture of apology. This brings the driver's arms down, in a less confrontational manner. This is a **levelling** gesture, aimed at bringing his status down to an equal level.

### **Summary of key learning points from these scenes**

- Shake hands, using an intentional gesture first.
- Prepare yourself – check out how you look.
- Prepare your room – think of the other person's comfort.
- Get rid of barriers like folders and paperwork.
- Use open gestures to show a desire to help.
- Try to use calming, defusing gestures (for example, holding your hands palm up).
- Create empathy (nodding in agreement, and so on).
- Lead with your own posture – as you relax and open up, so will others.
- When possible, move to their height – create evenness.

## **A business presentation**

The point of this scene is to show how it is possible to take control of a business meeting or presentation, but without appearing bossy or over-dominant. A few quick body language techniques can ensure you make your point and get listened to at a meeting, and that you deliver winning business presentations.

Carole is attending a client meeting where she will be giving a business presentation. She is introduced to the group by the MD, then left to choose her own seat. She selects the middle chair, as the one at the end of the table would isolate her and could make her look in conflict with, or a challenge to, the MD, whom she would be sitting opposite. She is also aware of the plug sockets and visual aids.

During her talk at the table, Carole has to deal with a woman who is distracted and possibly disinterested; shuffling papers and rooting in her bag. Carole gets the woman's attention by:

- using more dominant gestures
- leaning forward slightly across the table
- using emphatic gestures.

Carole is then seen presenting. She commands interest and attention by:

- standing to present
- getting the lighting right
- standing well – feet slightly apart
- using eye contact with her audience
- using open, emphatic gestures.

## **Key points**

- Carole prepares herself for the meeting, dressing smartly, checking her appearance, breathing out to expel tension, and holding bags in her left hand to leave the right free for confident handshakes.
- She uses positive, friendly eye contact with the other people present.
- She chooses her seat carefully:
  - next to the chairman would make her look like too much of an ally, or an assistant
  - directly opposite can appear confrontational

- too far away and she'll have trouble attracting attention
- diagonally opposite creates a positive, high profile approach.
- Carole scans her audience to read their signals. This means she is not overly self-focused, which could make her nervous; she can also read the mood of the attendees and tailor her approach accordingly.
- When she spots a lack of attention she changes gear to create listening.
- She has the lighting right for the presentation, so that both she and her slides are visible.
- She faces her audience, rather than reading off the screen.
- She rehearsed first at home to be able to present more confidently now.

#### **Summary of key learning points from this scene**

- Prepare and compose yourself before your meeting.
- Check out the room.
- Carry bags in your left hand, to leave the right free for handshakes.
- Control the room by using open, emphatic gestures and eye contact.
- Get your lighting right for presentations. You should always be visible!
- For maximum impact, stand to present.
- Use dominant gestures, and avoid nervous fiddling.

### Summary of key learning points from Part 1: Getting your message across

- You can't speak meaningfully with words alone.
- Body language is a two-way communication process.
- Balance your spoken words with all the unspoken signals you are sending out.

## Part 2: Reading body language

When we listen to other people we must equate their message with their gestures, posture and those tiny facial expressions that tell us if they are telling the truth, if we can trust them, or if they are just too shy to open up to us. The signs are always there. The skill comes from interpreting them.

### An appraisal and a disciplinary meeting

The point of these scenes is to show how you have the power to influence a difficult one-to-one meeting by using effective body language, but only if you have read the incoming signals first.

#### An appraisal

Michael is seen conducting an appraisal meeting with an experienced member of staff. The man is showing reluctance to speak by:

- looking down
- folded arms
- shifting in his seat
- picking fluff off his suit.

Michael starts to open the man up by using **mirroring**. This means he slightly copies the man's style, but without barriers between them (he gets rid of his folder and paperwork).

He then starts to open up his own gestures and relax in his chair. The result is that this gives the employee 'permission' to open up as well. There are still



some barriers there, though. The man displays reluctance to speak by pulling at his cuffs and face-touching. Eventually though, he copies Michael and opens up.

### **A disciplinary meeting**

Carole is conducting a tricky disciplinary meeting with an older employee. She starts badly, by looking nervous (fiddling and speaking hesitantly). The man responds by sitting in silence with his arms folded, and looking away. Carole asks him questions and suspects he is lying because he can't meet her gaze.

Although Carole finds the whole situation excruciatingly difficult, she resolves it well by:

- taking control
- encouraging and supporting the man to make a commitment
- showing a balance of authority and concern (through her eye contact, gestures and words).

#### **Summary of key learning points from these scenes**

- Listen to others – equate their messages with their gestures.
- Look for comfort gestures that signal anxiety or nerves (for example, face-touching).
- Get rid of barriers.
- Open people up by mirroring them, then relaxing your own posture and using open gestures. This gives them permission to do the same.
- Watch for and control your own signs of nerves.
- Look for signs of possible incongruence.

### **A recruitment interview**

The point of this scene is to illustrate effective body language at a recruitment interview. Many interviewees choose a low-status option, but this interviewee manages to look confident, positive and polite, while taking control of her side of the desk.

The young woman Michael is interviewing makes a good impression by following all the learning points mentioned in the summary which follows.

#### **Summary of key learning points from this scene**

- Walk in confidently.
- Smile.
- Offer a good, firm handshake.
- Take control of your space by moving or positioning your chair.
- Use active listening skills, such as eye contact and facial responses.

### **An interdepartmental meeting and a sales meeting**

The point of these scenes is to illustrate the importance of reading others at key meetings and then using your own body language signals to win them round.

#### **An interdepartmental meeting**

Carole has a meeting with a small group of colleagues. Her reception is mixed: two at one end are quiet and seem to be in agreement with her points. The woman directly opposite sits smiling, giving nodding affirmations and leaning forward slightly. She appears to be Carole's main ally. Then there is the woman whose complaint Carole had to deal with earlier (Part 1). She displays several closed, barrier signals and is unsmiling.

The restless man at the end of the table provides a bigger problem. He is plainly in disagreement with Carole and keen to enlist the others as allies. He does this by:

- fidgeting
- lounging back in his chair
- looking away
- rubbing the back of his neck
- playing with his mobile
- rocking in his chair
- looking at his watch
- playing with his pen
- glancing at the others, trying to make eye contact while Carole speaks.

The late arrival is a bored man. He displays boredom by:

- looking away
- building an arch with pens
- doodling.

When Carole tackles the restless man, he responds by sitting back in his chair and folding his arms. This signals very clearly that he no longer wants to join in the discussion. If Carole pursues this line of attack, she could isolate herself from the rest of the group, if they sided with him. She responds by leaning forward slightly, smiling and using emphatic gestures to register dominance, but without conflict. Eventually, the group relaxes and smiles. This is the point she has been working towards, as it registers agreement.

### **Key points**

- Read other people's gestures, even when it is you who is talking.
- Keep aware of changes in response.
- Tailor your own communication to change any negative responses.
- Give out the wrong signals and everything you've been working for could be wasted. By employing effective communication, you'll not only be getting your message across, you'll enjoy a deeper understanding of the business world around you.

### **A sales meeting**

Although this scene is short, it is important as it shows how much Michael has improved his body language and, consequently, his relations with his staff.

During the meeting, Michael detects, from the salesman's eyes dropping, that he wants to interrupt. The salesman is obviously surprised at Michael noticing this. Michael's posture (sitting forward), eye contact and tone of voice all encourage him to contribute, and the salesman does so with confidence.

### **Summary of key learning points from these scenes**

- Scan the people around the table throughout the meeting.
- Look for signs of disagreement, boredom, distraction or impatience.
- Work to unite your audience by using eye contact, emphatic hand gestures and positive, enthusiastic body language.
- Avoid subjective attacks that could cause body language shut-down and might involve the entire group.
- Interpret agreement – look for relaxed posture, smiling, nodding and open gestures.

### **Summary of key learning points from the whole programme**

#### **Getting your message across**

- Balance your spoken words with all the unspoken signals you are sending out.
- Give out the wrong signals, and all your work could be wasted.
- Think about yourself – what are your signals saying?

#### **Reading body language**

- Listen actively to others and interpret their body language.
- Look for possible incongruence.
- Exploit incoming messages to get people on your side.
- Create empathy by matching, mirroring and pacing.
- Make body language and the spoken word work to unite your audience.

#### **Remember!**

Body language is a two-way communication process.

## Discussion of scenes

### Questions to ask

- What did (name of character) do well?
- How did this affect the behaviour of the customer/member of staff?
- What did (name of character) do badly?
- Why did (name of character) react in this way?
- How would you behave under the same circumstances?
- What body language would you use? What would you hope to say by using it? What effect do you think it would have on the customer/member of staff?
- At what points did you feel the communication was working?
- Where did it start to go wrong?

## Dealing with objections

### Steps to defuse objections

Participants might complain that awareness of their own body language makes them feel awkward and uncomfortable. Explain that this is part of the learning process. Getting out of your comfort zone is vital when learning new skills. Ask how many of them can drive a car. How easy was it to learn this skill? How awkward and uncomfortable did they feel when they started learning?

The first step is awareness of anything they are currently doing 'wrong' and would like to improve.

The second step is to focus on what they would like to do instead, for example, 'I tend to fiddle with my hair when I feel anxious; instead, I would like to use positive, emphatic hand gestures'.

The third step is to keep working on the positive improvements. Explain that focusing on 'Do' commands is more effective than telling yourself 'Don't'. The subconscious tends to ignore the word 'Don't' and only listen to the command itself, so if you tell yourself 'Don't fiddle with your hair' the only suggestion that will get through will be 'Fiddle with your hair', leading to an

increase in fiddling! 'Use open gestures' is a much more effective command. Participants might struggle with the idea of reading other people's signals more effectively. Explain that this is not a precise science, and that they should use enhanced visual perception, that is, become more aware of the non-verbal signals of other people as a way of seeking out more clues about their feelings and state of mind. The idea is that it aids the communication process by helping to read between the lines. When we ignore the visual cues people give us we trade in assumption. Explain that assumption makes an ASS of U and ME!

# Role-play masters

Photocopy the masters of the role-plays you have chosen to use. Where two or more briefs appear on one page, cut out the individual briefs before distributing them to participants.

You may want to take the role of the customer or staff member marked with an asterisk(\*) yourself, or you may prefer to enlist a colleague or another delegate.



## Role-play 1 – Front-line staff

### **The customer's brief\***

You are returning your mobile phone to the shop that you bought it from.

You have owned it for six months but have lost the receipt.

You have checked in your diary and it is in the guarantee six-month period. The telephone is faulty and you want it exchanged on the spot because you use it for business.

This is the third telephone with the same problem, although you purchased the others from another company.

The woman who sold you the telephone was rude and unhelpful.

You are about to be served by a different employee but you still feel disgruntled and expect the worst.

### **The company employee's brief**

The manager is off sick and you are holding the fort behind the counter of a busy mobile phone shop. This customer has come in with a problem and you have two more people waiting.

You check this customer's details on the computer and discover their telephone was purchased six months and five days ago, which means that the guarantee expired five days ago.

You can only offer a repair, which will mean sending the telephone away for two weeks. The repair may or may not be free, depending on the fault they find.

Under no circumstances can you give a refund or exchange.

When you look at the original notes you find your colleague has noted that this customer was difficult and rude.



## Role-play 2 – Front-line staff

### The customer's brief\*

You are a partner in an accountancy firm, visiting a client company for a meeting with Diana Kershaw.

You haven't dealt with Diana before, but your colleague, who is sick, passed her name on via a text message.

You have arrived ten minutes late for your appointment and are worried you will create a bad impression.

You need to get to the meeting as soon as possible, or you could lose a very major account, as you know from your colleague this client is a stickler for punctuality.

The colleague has told you that the reception staff in this company are snooty and unhelpful.

Your taxi let you down and you are feeling angry and impatient.

### The receptionist's brief

You work on reception in a blue-chip company.

One of the bosses is called Dave Kershaw. Dave has told you he is in an important meeting all morning, and under no circumstances to be interrupted.

If you do ring his line, it is on voicemail.



### Role-play 3 – Front-line staff

#### **The hospital visitor's brief\***

You are visiting a close relative in hospital. Your English is poor and you are visiting London for the first time.

You have been told your relative is in The London Clinic.

You are anxious about your relative.

You are sure you are in the right hospital.

#### **The hospital receptionist's brief**

You work in the busy hospital reception of The London Clinic.

When you deal with this person you find the name of their relative is not on the list of patients at your hospital.

You often have this problem with people who have been told that their relative is in a London clinic and they assume it must be yours.



## Role-play 4 – Management

### The employee's brief\*

You have been called in to see your boss because you have been late several times in the past month.

Your marriage is in trouble and you are suffering from stress. Until recently your punctuality has been good.

You should be at work by 9.00 a.m. Your boss isn't known for punctuality.

You don't feel your boss is approachable and you are reluctant to talk about your home problems.

Your boss only joined the firm six months ago, and isn't aware that you applied for his/her job but were turned down.

### The manager's brief

You have been working as a manager in the company for about six months.

You heard on the grapevine that the employee you have called into your office applied for your job and is holding a grudge because he/she failed to get it. Since you started, his/her work has been declining and now he/she has been late for work on four occasions in the past month.

The company has a firm view on lateness. Start time is 9.00 a.m.

Sometimes you yourself arrive half an hour after the rest of the workforce, but only because you have been working from home. Your conditions of work mean you can arrive later, but only because you work from home from 7 a.m., ringing suppliers, and then finish at 7.30 p.m., catching up on paperwork after everyone else has gone.

You have called the employee in to talk about the lateness issue.



## Role-play 5 – Management

### **The client's brief\***

You run your own large company, manufacturing packaging for the food industry. You are expecting a visit from an 'account manager' from a company that supplies the see-through plastic for one of your products.

You were rather disappointed to discover their deliveries were late last month, but generally their service and product is satisfactory.

You use another company for your other boxes, mainly out of loyalty.

You haven't met this visitor before.

### **The account manager's brief**

Your company makes see-through plastic.

You have been told to visit existing clients to see if you can boost sales.

Your appointment is with the owner of a large company, making packaging for the food industry.

You have not met this person before.



## Role-play 6 – Management

### The interviewee's brief\*

You have applied for a job as manager of an IT department in a marketing company.

You haven't held a management post before, but believe you have the right qualities.

Your previous jobs have been on IT help-desks.

You think you are a 'people person' because you are honest and up-front, always speaking your mind.

If people get stroppy you deal with them confidently.

You have had six jobs in the last two years, mainly because you felt your talents were being underutilised in non-managerial roles.

### The manager's brief

You are a recruitment manager in a marketing company.

You are recruiting a manager for the IT department. The main role of this department is a support one, helping internal customers when there is a problem with their PCs.

The IT team are under constant pressure, and their role is very focused on customer care.

The manager will have to motivate the team as well as manage, with some hands-on involvement, when things are busy.

You are interviewing a new applicant. You would prefer someone with management experience, but are willing to consider someone who can prove they have the necessary skills and personality.



## Role-play 7 – Presenting

### Brief

Give a five-minute presentation to the group, imagining they are potential clients for the product/service of your company/department.

They are interested in hearing information under three key headings:

- The size and scope of your company.
- The USPs (unique selling points) of your service or product.
- The values of your company.

## Role-play 8 – Presenting

### Brief

Give a five-minute presentation about your company, imagining you are talking to a group of graduates as part of their induction programme.

It is your job to give them as thorough an introduction to the company as possible.

## Role-play 9 – The trainer

### Brief

Give a five-minute training presentation, aiming to teach a group of complete novices the following:

- How to use the Internet.

None of these people have used a computer before.



## Role-play 10 – The appraisal

### The manager's brief\*

Your company has a pay structure with little flexibility. However, some increases can be discretionary.

To balance your department's figures, however, you have been told to keep costs down.

Times are exceptionally bad for the company at present, although it does seem to be turning the corner and orders are up for the next financial year.

You are about to have your annual appraisal with Carl/Karen, who has been a good, if not exceptional, member of your engineering team for the last five years.

### The employee's brief

You (Carl/Karen) have worked in the engineering department for five years. The pressures of the job increased a year ago when your colleague left and you covered for their work.

Although someone new has been taken on to relieve you of some of your extra duties, they are not proving up to the job and you are still having to work late on a regular basis.

You enjoy your job, but feel a pay rise would be fair. You have decided to tell your manager at your annual appraisal meeting.

Negotiate your salary increase.







# Participants' handout masters

## Handout 1

### First impressions

Are created by:

- gaze, eye contact
- facial expression
- posture and stance
- gestures
- spatial behaviour (how close we stand)
- touch
- grooming
- dress.



## Handout 2

### Think – feel – behave

When you tackle a difficult workplace situation, the thoughts in your head become the feelings and emotions which, in turn, translate into your body language.

Taking the situations in the video as an example, think of situations in your own job that you currently find challenging. Then work through this three-stage process, describing each step in detail:

Step 1: When I have to deal with this situation, I tend to think . . .

Step 2: Which in turn makes me feel . . .

Step 3: Which shows in my body language as . . .



## Handout 3

### Quiz

Define the following qualities in body language terms. How do they look?

What kinds of gestures, expressions and posture might be involved?

1. Confident
2. Smug
3. Alert and listening
4. Bored
5. Shy
6. Stressed
7. Welcoming
8. Stand-offish
9. Angry/aggressive
10. Sarcastic
11. Patronising
12. Friendly



## Handout 4

### Manager's assessment of body language signals

Body language is not precise, just a guide to inner feelings and emotions.

If you were interviewing someone, how would you assess each of the following? (You can supply more than one option.)

1. A very stretched, rigid smile
2. A wet hand shake
3. Face-touching
4. Head-rubbing
5. Rubbing back of neck
6. Hands to mouth when speaking
7. Repeatedly straightening tie
8. Frequent, fast blinking
9. Arms folded
10. Foot-tapping
11. Fast, frequent nodding
12. Steepled fingers
13. Legs crossed high, with calf on thigh and hand on calf
14. Leaning back in seat with hands clasped behind head



## Handout 5

### Front-line staff's assessment of body language signals

Body language is not precise, just a guide to inner feelings and emotions.

If you were interviewing someone, how would you assess each of the following? (You can supply more than one option)

1. Slumped posture, looking away
2. Folded arms
3. Hands on hips
4. Staring at you
5. Hand-wringing
6. Pointing at you when talking
7. Narrowing eyes
8. Rubbing back of head
9. Nodding while listening, in pace with your speech
10. Frowning
11. A relaxed, relieved-looking smile
12. Fiddling with jewellery
13. Looking down to the left



## Handout 6

### Assessment/feedback sheets

When you watch the role-plays, your personal feedback is vital. As well as your overall comments, refer to this checklist to ensure your feedback is helpfully specific.

Did the participant:

1. Use eye contact?
2. Use signs of active listening, if so what?
3. Have a genuine-looking smile?
4. Mirror the other participant to create empathy?
5. Use any 'comfort' gestures? If so, what?
6. Use any emphatic gestures? If so, what?
7. Use any denial gestures? If so, which?
8. Display higher or lower-status? Explain how.
9. Defuse or intensify any emotional content? If so, how?
10. Use appropriate greeting and closing gestures? What were they?
11. Display nervousness? If so, how?
12. How many non-verbal signals did you notice that
  - a) helped the transaction?
  - b) hindered it?





# Handout 7

## Action plan – notes for future steps leading to change

From today's session and the discussions that have come from it, make a list of any negative body language you are currently using and, next to each point, write the gesture or expression you would like to replace it with.

For example:

- 1. Folded arms – open, emphatic gestures
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.



# Trainer's briefs

These Trainer's briefs are not intended to be distributed to participants. They are trainer's aids to supply suggested answers and to facilitate discussion.

## Trainer's brief 1

### Handout 3 – Quiz answers

There are no absolutes, so discuss any points the participants have made, but steer them towards the following suggestions:

- 1. Confident** – standing tall; open gestures; emphatic gestures; smiling; eye contact; evenly balanced posture; smooth, well-paced movements; relaxed shoulders.
- 2. Smug** – raised chin; raised eyebrows; smiling with mouth closed; very erect posture; looking down nose; arms folded; hands behind head.
- 3. Alert and listening** – eye contact; nodding; finger to chin; head tilted slightly; facial expressions mirroring speaker's; leaning forward slightly; turning face to the speaker.
- 4. Bored** – trying to continue working; smothering a yawn; chin resting in hand; glancing away; looking at watch; low response to speaker; face-touching; tapping fingers or foot; doodling; slumped in seat.
- 5. Shy** – barrier gestures, for example, folded arms; head held down; hair over face; fiddling gestures; hands covering mouth or face; rapid blinking; fiddling with hair; little use of eye contact.
- 6. Stressed** – shoulders raised; frequent swallowing; rapid movements; increased use of 'comfort' gestures, like fiddling with tie or jewellery; tapping fingers, pen or foot; shallow, almost panting breaths; hands clenched into fists; mouth tight, lips pulled in; sweating.
- 7. Welcoming** – eye contact; genuine-looking smile; nod of acknowledgment; coming around the desk; shaking hands; open gestures; leaning forward; mirroring their body language; active listening signals.
- 8. Stand-offish** – erect posture; no smile; looking down nose; barrier signals such as folded arms or legs; torso turned away; deadpan facial expression.

**9. Angry/aggressive** – clenched fists; pointing; hands on hips; folded arms; leaning over someone and/or their desk; staring; taut mouth, lips pulled in; chin stuck out; very upright posture; hands behind head; close spatial behaviour.

**10. Sarcastic** – fake smile, not in the eyes; overdone friendliness or politeness; head on one side, eyebrows raised; sneering smile.

**11. Patronising** – leaning over someone; over-friendly, sugary smile; childlike gestures; clenched hands, held up to chest; tutting and shaking head while smiling.

**12. Friendly** – smiling; eye contact; leaning slightly forward; open gestures; palms up; slight head tilt; mirrored body posture.

### Handout 4 – Answers

1. **A very stretched, rigid smile** – nervous; on best behaviour; passive.
2. **A wet hand shake** – anxiety; low self-esteem.
3. **Face-touching** – discomfort; anxiety; possibly lying.
4. **Head-rubbing** – puzzled; stumped by question.
5. **Rubbing back of neck** – childlike comfort gesture; stress or anxiety; possibly lying.
6. **Hands to mouth when speaking** – lack of confidence in words; could be lying.
7. **Repeatedly straightening tie** – nervousness; tension; wanting to be on best behaviour.
8. **Frequent, fast blinking** – sign of stress or nervousness; feeling under pressure.
9. **Arms folded** – self-protective; feeling threatened; self-comfort gesture; creating security barrier.
10. **Foot-tapping** – impatience; used as a metronome to make them think faster and more clearly.
11. **Fast, frequent nodding** – stress; pressure; desire to interrupt.
12. **Steepled fingers** – fingers joined at tips, pointing upwards, a high-status gesture; feeling superior; self-confidence bordering on smugness; exacting and precise, analytical thinker.
13. **Legs crossed high, with calf on thigh and hand on calf** – in part disagreement with what you have said; not buying in to your viewpoint, but willing to listen.
14. **Leaning back in seat with hands clasped behind head** – over-confident; defiant; high-status power-posture; arrogant; wanting to belittle or challenge you.

### Handout 5 – Answers

1. **Slumped posture, looking away** – suppressed anger or irritation; nervousness; disagreement with your point; depression or worry.
2. **Folded arms** – complaint; nervousness; they feel threatened; they may be about to stop communicating; disagreement.
3. **Hands on hips** – anger; aggression.
4. **Staring at you** – trying to get your attention; anger; aggression.
5. **Hand-wringing** – acute anxiety, worry; tension; stress; need for sympathy.
6. **Pointing at you when talking** – complaint; aggression; anger; frustration.
7. **Narrowing eyes** – disbelief; anger.
8. **Rubbing back of head** – anxiety; in need of reassurance; confused; possibly lying.
9. **Nodding while listening, in pace with your speech** – in agreement; signaling understanding.
10. **Frowning** – intense listening; potential disagreement; not understanding; confused; angry; needing more detail or explanation.
11. **A relaxed, relieved-looking smile** – has made the decision to buy.
12. **Fiddling with jewellery** – discomfort, embarrassment; stress; anxiety; in need of a second opinion.
13. **Looking down to the left** – having a conversation with themselves.

