

## Recognizing Body Language Clues *by Cathy Kuzel*

When it comes to recognizing body language clues from your prospective clients, you must think like a detective. You must ask questions, watch their responses to them, AND you must listen as well.

Listen very carefully to what they say and how they say it.

As Sherlock would say, "It's elementary!" Here are some 'clues' that can help you.

The following tips are general and do not take into account cultural differences. If you are traveling abroad for business, take some time to research the customs of the people you are visiting. It could make or break a business relationship.

**If a person's hands are open and relaxed**, palms are turned upward and the person shrugs, what does this tell you? It suggests that he or she is open, sincere, listening and ready to cooperate. It's a very positive sign.

**What if the person avoids eye contact?** This can mean that they don't like you or something you've just said, or you've struck a nerve that may have triggered a past fear.

Strong eye contact is essential in communicating with your potential client. If you look at a person eye-to-eye, they will focus on what you are saying.

Many salespeople don't have good eye contact and this is where they lose most of their business or they have the 'stare' and quite frankly, no one wants that kind of eye contact!

**Solution?** Smile. Try to gain eye contact, reiterate the last point and ask if it bothers them. State your desire to fulfill their needs.

**The client's jacket is unbuttoned and later removed.** This is a signal that your client is very relaxed and willing to cooperate. It could mean it's the right time to roll up your sleeves and get down to business.

Mirror your client's actions as far as you are comfortable to keep the atmosphere relaxed. As a salesperson, it is important that people feel relaxed, comfortable, and emotionally stable in your presence.

**The person moves closer or puts her elbows on the table**, leaning forward. This is a signal that their level of trust is increasing. They are ready to come to an agreement.

This is the time to give a brief recap of what has been discussed and agreed to. Ask a closing question to determine how ready they may be to move forward on the proposal. You may not have to go into the second half of your presentation.

**The potential client faces and looks intently at you.** His head might be slightly tilted. He touches his chin or the side of his face.

What's happening?

This pose indicates he is very interested and is giving thoughtful consideration to your proposal. Ask if he has any questions about the proposal. If not, try a test close.

Speak with your own body language and you will be heard.

Body language plays a big part in the day to day efforts to communicate with clients and associates.

Take the time to learn to 'read' these subtle yet important clues. Once you've mastered the language, you'll be amazed at how much "conversation" you've been missing!

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### **About the Author**

Cathy Kuzel, author of *Are you a Collector or a Connector*, publishes "Connect!" a monthly ezine providing free information and resources for entrepreneurs. She is a professional speaker and trainer on sales, customer service, professional development and a guru at networking.

For more information visit [www.cathykuzel.com](http://www.cathykuzel.com)