

USING BODY LANGUAGE FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

By Traci Brown

In business, you are negotiating all the time, with suppliers, employees, bosses and with your clients. You're also probably always negotiating with someone in your family at home to get them to do what you want. Learning how to easily get to agreement is useful in any situation and can make life lots easier and make you a more effective leader at the same time.

The key to leading people and successfully negotiating is to create a deep feeling of connection between you and whomever you're communicating with. People say 'yes' much more often when they're really comfortable with you. Sometimes this feeling is automatic but why leave it to chance? You can create ease and flow any time you want with anyone when you pay attention to the details! Did you know that you're communicating all the time, no matter what words are coming out of your mouth and even when they're not? Studies show that 55% of your communication is your body language and 38% is your pacing and tonality. When you master a few simple tools you can start to use these parts of communication to persuade any one, any time.

To create a magical, mystical connection you must become flexible in your communication. Now, you most likely communicate only your way. You're in your box. You do things however you do them and say things however you say them and hope your message gets across exactly how you want it to. Maybe it works out the way you intended, and maybe it doesn't. You can learn to communicate the way OTHERS need to unconsciously hear your message. But how?

These 3 tips will assist you.

Tip #1 Always address people at a 45 degree angle or greater.

When you face people straight on you create a feeling of deep, unconscious confrontation both in you and in them. This is troublesome if you want an easy negotiation. You want to make yourself seem as non-confrontational as possible. One of the easiest things you can do is to change your body angle when addressing them. Using a 45 degree angle will ease the situation. Just open your shoulders up slightly to them. It doesn't matter if you're standing or sitting. You can always adjust yourself. When in meetings, set the room up so that you're not staring at each other across the table, stagger the chairs, use your chair's swivel. Just notice how this eases the situation. You can feel it!

Tip #2 Match their body movements

A study at Duke University proved that just physically doing what other people do helps them feel comfortable and they will say 'yes' more easily. But you've got to do it right. Doing it wrong will create the opposite effect! People move all the time when you're talking with them. So if they lean on their right leg, you lean on your right leg. You'll look like a non-mirror image. If they scratch their ear with their left hand, you scratch your ear with your left hand. If they lean on their left elbow on the table, you lean on your left elbow on the table. It's easy. Just make yourself look like their opposite. When they move, you wait a bit and subtly make the same move yourself. This reaches them at really deep, unconscious level and they won't know you're doing it. But they'll feel great around you and feel like you're really listening. Most people are paying so much attention to themselves that they're not paying attention to you so you won't get caught. But you've got to take the time to get good at it. It's subtle!

Tip #3: Match their pace of speech

This works great over the phone when others can't see you. Many top level executives and leaders like you think really quickly because you've got lots of details on your mind, you're organized and want to get on to the next thing. This will lead you to speaking really quickly, too. Know that all of your employees and clients probably aren't as speedy as you. Just listen to how quickly they talk and match it. You may need to slow down a bit to meet them where they are. If you go into tons of rapid-fire details with someone who processes information more slowly than you, you'll lose them and everything you say will go in one ear and out the other. Slowing down can be frustrating till you're used to it but is well worth the effort.

These three tools do take practice to master, but you'll find that you can get good at them very quickly. You'll start to notice how people respond to you differently than they have in the past. You'll have more clients and reach agreement more easily than ever before.

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