

## Body language

Body language plays an important role in interpreting and sending the message you want to convey. There are sometimes subtle and sometimes not so subtle movements, gestures, facial expressions and even shifts in our whole bodies that indicate that something is going on. Whatever is happening on the inside is reflected on the outside. Below you can find some tips regarding body language in assertive communication.

- **EYE CONTACT:** Look at the person most of the time. But, do not stare at people all the time.
- **BODY POSTURE:** Try to face the person. Stand or sit up tall. But, don't be a stiff board.
- **DISTANCE/PHYSICAL CONTACT:** If you smell or feel the other person's breath, you are probably too close.
- **GESTURES:** Use hand gestures to add to what you are saying, but remember that you are not conducting an orchestra.
- **FACIAL EXPRESSIONS:** Your face should match your emotions and what you are saying.
- **VOICE TONE, INFLECTION, and VOLUME:** You want to be heard. In order to be heard you have to pay attention to the tone of your voice, the inflection of our voice and volume of your voice.
- **FLUENCY:** It is important to get your words out in an efficient manner. If a person stammers or rambles on, the listener gets bored.
- **TIMING:** When you are expressing negative feelings or making a request of someone, this is especially important. Do it as soon as there is a time for both parties to resolve their issues alone.
- **LISTENING:** If you are making statements that express your feelings you need to give the other person a chance to respond.
- **CONTENT:** What a person says is one of the most important parts of the message.

Source:

Mind Tools (2015). *Body Language: Understanding Non-Verbal*. Retrieved 27/09/2016 from [https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/Body\\_Language.htm](https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/Body_Language.htm)