

## Body Language 100

### Final Thoughts

by Bob Whipple, MBA, CPTD



I sized this series of articles on Body Language to be 100 articles. This will be the final installment. It took me two years to complete the project by publishing one article in the series per week.

If you would like to scan the various topics I have written about on body language, the best way to do it is to go to the index at the end of this blog. Each article is presented as a link, so you just click on whatever interests you,

and you will immediately be able to see the original blog.

I started studying Body Language in 1978, when my bride bought me a fascinating book on the topic. It was [“How To Read a Person Like a Book,”](#) by Gerard Nierenberg. The book was first published in the 1960s, and the current release was done in 2010.

I have been studying the subject of Body Language for over 40 years. There is no end to the learning, because the topic is truly endless, and new insights come along on a regular basis.

#### The importance of Body Language

Way back in 1967, [Albert Mehrabian](#) did a series of experiments at UCLA. He wanted to determine what percentage of meaning came from the words being used when two people were face to face discussing their feelings or attitudes. He measured that only 7% came from the spoken words, 38% came from the tone of voice, and a whopping 55% of meaning came from body language.

If we knew all along that the majority of information was contained in body language, I wonder why there were no courses in grade school or high school to teach us how to interpret the body language of others and how to control our own. Most of us learned the skill by trial and error through our formative years.

The errors we made in interpreting the meaning of body language set us all back a huge amount in terms of building strong relationships of trust with other people. That is why

all my leadership courses over the years have been heavily laced with content and practice on body language.

## **Most Body Language is subconscious**

What most people don't realize is that the vast majority of signals we send to other people with our Body Language are completely subconscious. Some signals, such as facial expressions, are done consciously, but most body language is hidden from our own view. For example, you have no idea the dilation of your pupils at any point in time, unless you are looking in a mirror.

The thought patterns in our subconscious mind have major impact on how we communicate to others with our bodies.

Likewise, when we are anxious, our adrenal glands and a small number of neurons in the medulla oblongata instantly secrete the hormone Adrenaline, which causes all kinds of unconscious changes in our body reactions. It creates the famous "fight or flight" response to a stimulus. This all happens automatically, and we have little control over it, but other people can easily observe it in us.

The most vexing problem with body language is when we send conflicting signals about how we are feeling. We may be anxious about a new job possibility but trying to hide that anxiety with BL that exudes confidence. In doing so, we send an incongruent set of Body Language signals that the other person will pick up on. He or she may not know exactly what is going on with us, but for sure something is wrong.

The more you know about Body Language, the better you will be able to accurately decode the actions of others and control your own signals. That is why I wrote this series. It is a gift of some basic knowledge of how this complex science works with human beings. I sincerely hope you have enjoyed it and can use it to enhance the quality of your life.

## **Outline of Chapters in Body Language Series**

1. [Starting New Series](#)
2. [Five C's of BL](#)
3. [Body Position](#)
4. [Facial Expressions](#)
5. [Steepling](#)
6. [Folding Arms](#)
7. [Finger to Side Of Nose](#)
8. [Chin Gestures](#)
9. [Finger In Collar](#)
10. [Scratching Head](#)
11. [Drumming Fingers](#)
12. [Tugging On Ear](#)
13. [Wringing Hands](#)
14. [Large Hand Gestures](#)

15. [Pinching Bridge Of Nose](#)
16. [Looking Over Glasses](#)
17. [Playing With Hair](#)
18. [Head In Hands](#)
19. [The Eyes](#)
20. [Language of the Eyes](#)
21. [The Mouth](#)
22. [The Forehead](#)
23. [Micro Expressions](#)
24. [Jaw & Chin](#)
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27. [Sitting Positions](#)
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29. [Verifying What You See](#)
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31. [Silence](#)
32. [Using Volume](#)
33. [Mirroring](#)
34. [Proximity](#)
35. [Head Tilting](#)
36. [Crossing Ankles](#)
37. [Head Nodding](#)
38. [Sour Face](#)
39. [Rolling Eyes](#)
40. [Double Point](#)
41. [Strange Handshake](#)
42. [Animals](#)
43. [The Bully](#)
44. [Comfort](#)
45. [Children](#)
46. [Clenched Teeth](#)
47. [Conflict](#)
48. [Concentration](#)
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50. [Clothing](#)
51. [Slouching](#)
52. [Winking](#)
53. [The Tongue](#)
54. [Doubt](#)
55. [Evasion](#)
56. [Thumbs Up](#)
57. [Time Out](#)
58. [Embarrassment](#)
59. [Okay](#)
60. [Behind Your Back](#)
61. [Air Kissing](#)
62. [Victory](#)
63. [Fist In The Air](#)
64. [Hand Slap](#)
65. [Fist Bump](#)
66. [Mirroring](#)

67. [Afraid](#)
68. [Shock](#)
69. [Worried](#)
70. [Talking With Your Hands](#)
71. [Guilt](#)
72. [Exasperation or Rage](#)
73. [Coy](#)
74. [Pondering](#)
75. [Pride](#)
76. [Contempt](#)
77. [Compassion](#)
78. [Faking Emotions](#)
79. [Skeptical](#)
80. [Bored](#)
81. [Search Me](#)
82. [Shy](#)
83. [Handshake Post COVID-19](#)
84. [Zoom Eye Contact](#)
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*This is a part in a series of articles on “Body Language” by Bob Whipple “The Trust Ambassador.”*