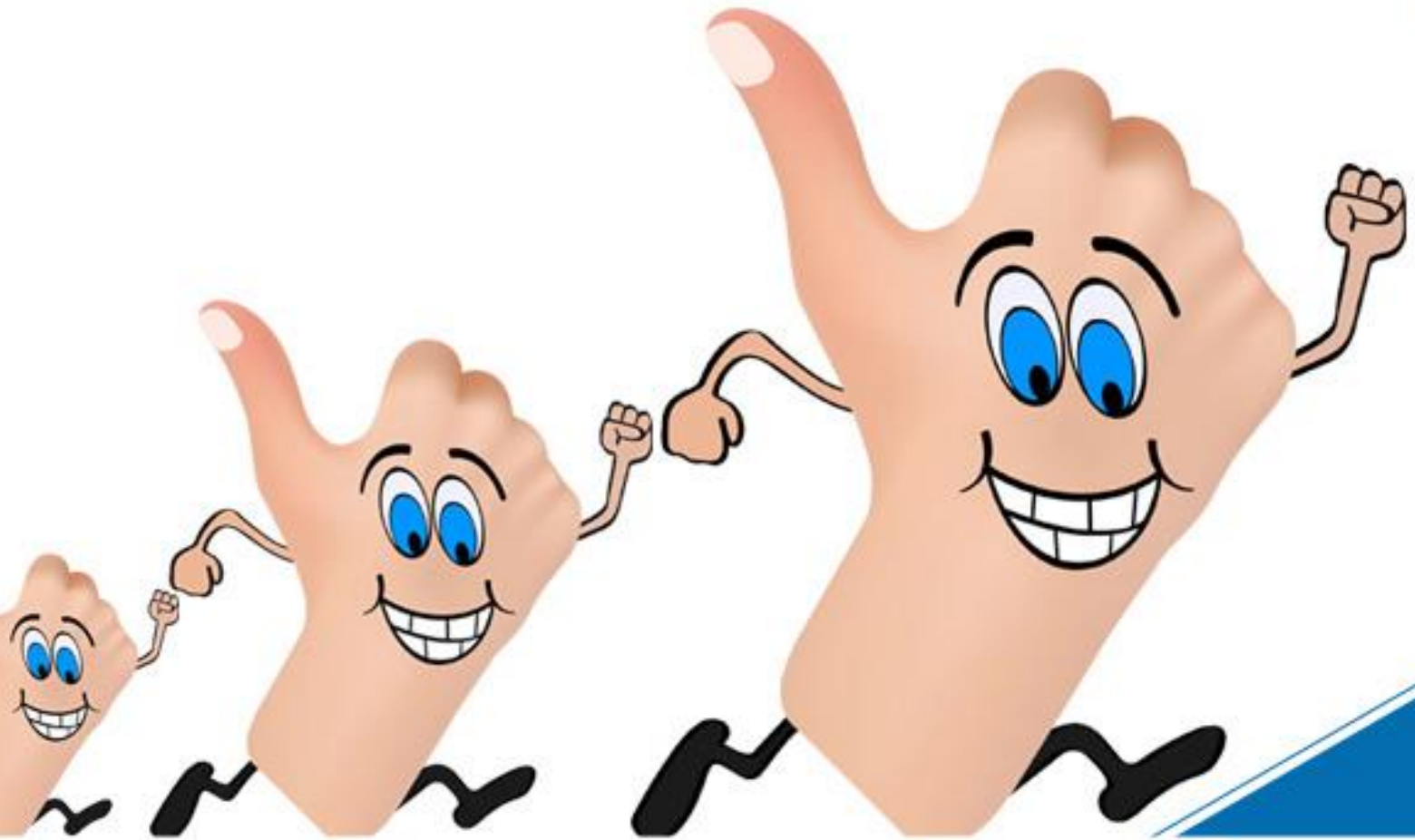




# Positive Body Language



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## About the Tutorial

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This tutorial delineates the fact that body language plays a pivotal role in our day-to-day activities and relationships with others. Proper body language is required for building a good rapport and developing good relationships with our friends, colleagues, and family members. If we don't follow the rules of good body language, our repute and chances of landing into better opportunities can reduce drastically.

Improper body language leads to ruined interviews, wrong first impressions, and conveyance of wrong messages. This tutorial details certain tips and techniques to develop a positive body language and to project oneself in public in a more confident and elegant manner.

Body language is not just about hand or leg movements, but also about how we conduct ourselves when we are at rest. Hence, positive body language is a must for not only interviews or formal discussions but also for functions, parties, and any kind of meeting or interaction we are involved in on a daily basis.

## Audience

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This tutorial is aimed towards people who are in college or are about to join the corporate sector and also for those professionals working in any different organizations. Individuals who have no knowledge on proper body language can benefit from this tutorial.

## Prerequisites

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There is no prerequisite for this tutorial. Similarly, there is no barrier of language or ethnicity for gaining benefit from this tutorial.

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# 1. Introduction

**Body language** is defined as the **non-verbal communication** between two individuals or a group of individuals through physical behaviors such as limb movements, facial expressions, eye movements, other bodily gestures and postures.

Today, the term has assumed so much importance and prominence in all spheres of life that without a positive body language, none of us can survive in the professional arena, personal lives, and in the world, in general.

Body language comes into picture not only during normal conversations, but also during formal discussions, interviews, group discussions, panel meetings, etc. Proper body language not only conveys the right message to the recipient, but also attracts or repels the recipient.

For example, you are facing a job interview and the interviewer is questioning you. Now, although you are polite and replying well to the questions, the interviewer may still not select you. The reason is very simple. Perhaps your body posture or body movements were not appropriate or were rude. This may have led the interviewer to think that you are either not interested, or you are not a good candidate for the job profile.

However, body language is **different from sign languages**. In sign language, words or information is conveyed voluntarily using hand and finger movements. In sign language, mostly lip movements, finger movements, palm movements and eye movements are used to convey information to the recipient of the information. However, body language is different from sign language in the fact that **body language is largely involuntary** and is not actively controlled by the mind. However, **sign languages are voluntary** and are controlled by the mind to convey information.

## What is Body Language?

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Following are the important features of body language:

- It is a set of involuntary actions of the body parts.
- It involves movement, especially of the limbs and the head.
- It does not have grammar.
- It has to be interpreted broadly by other people.

## What is Sign Language?

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Following are the important features of sign language:

- It is not the deliberate movement of body parts to convey information. It is hence, not a voluntary action of body parts.
- It has its own grammar.
- It has absolute meaning, instead of subjective meaning.

However, this does not mean that if body language is involuntary, it cannot be controlled. By practicing certain techniques mentioned in this tutorial and through careful evaluation of one's body movements each time, one can improve one's body language easily.

Body language is quite **particular to a specific culture**. What is accepted in one culture may be a big 'No' in other cultures. Hence, body language is not universal and can be ambiguous too. This tutorial will teach you the essentials of good body language.

## What is a Positive Body Language?

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People find positive language **appealing, receptive and easy to confront**. A positive body language must place us in a position of comfort, dignity, and likeability. It helps us to be open to other people and be approachable, helping them feel comfortable when they are interacting with us. If our body movements somehow convey the opposite, then our body language is not positive and hence, needs to be improved.

- Body language must not be defensive. Defensive body language discourages people from approaching us and establishing a connect with us.
- Body language must not display a sense of disinterest towards the other person, as it can lead to failure in jobs, interviews and high-profile meetings.
- The body language of a person must neither be authoritative nor submissive, but assertive to put forth our opinion and stance confidently without meaning any offence to the other person.

Positive body language helps people to be liked by other people in an organization or community and is therefore must for people across disciplines and ethnicities, as it plays a pivotal role in shaping our discussions and relationships with other people in our daily life.



## 2. Importance of Body Language

Body language is of utmost importance in this highly competitive world. The corporate sector values good body language a lot and any sign of bad body language can break deals, even leading to **loss of network for people**.

An old adage says "Actions speak louder than words". Our body posture, along with its movements and placement of different body parts, play an important role in letting out our feelings and emotions, even if we don't display the emotions voluntarily.

### Assertive Behavior

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A positive body language helps the person to be more **assertive** and assists in putting his or her opinion forward more easily than the others. Positive body language is liked by other people and hence, the person carrying a positive body language gets more attention and favor in any discussion.

### Non-verbal Communication

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Research says that our communication consists of **35% verbal communication and 65% non-verbal communication**. This implies that whatever we speak voluntarily comprises of just 35% of what the other person makes out of us. The remaining 65% information about us is learnt from our body language. Our body language helps others identify our emotions, status and even our lifestyle.

Non-verbal communication plays a significant role in conjunction with the spoken words. Our non-verbal communication can **reiterate** our message, **contradict** our words, **reinforce** our statement, **substitute** the meaning of our sentences and **complement** the meaning of our words. Since non-verbal communication can either emphasize our point or contradict it, it is necessary to keep our body language in sync with our emotions. Any sign of conflict between the body language and our words can make us appear untrustworthy and deceptive.

### Workplace Success

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Positive body language is a must in workplaces and corporate environment. Healthy body language can **help foster team spirit in the workplace**, which can also boost the morale of the employees. **Delegation of responsibilities becomes easier** through positive body language. It can also help in conveying respect for colleagues and **resolving conflicts** in the organization.

During corporate meetings, one can display interest, reception, and joy using positive body language. A **gentle smile, open palms, leaning forward and eye contact** can go a long way in establishing rapport with another person in the meeting thus helping build and sustain a healthy relationship with the other parties in a meeting.

## Relationships

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Negative body language can give way to a lot of misinterpretation and misunderstandings. Maintaining a body posture and absurd body movements that is offensive to the other person can ruin a relationship.

For instance, you need to understand the emotions and mood of the other person and need to customize your behavior accordingly. If your spouse is in a good mood, then it is okay to laugh or tease her occasionally. However, the same activity can be misinterpreted as sarcasm or irritable behavior if the spouse is not in a good mood. This can lead to issues between couples and can also lead to damaged relationships.

## Public Speaking

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In public speaking, body language assumes an altogether different importance. If the speaker has a defensive body language or has a passive body language, there are high chances that he or she won't be listened to intently by the audience. The impact factor of such speeches also is reduced by a large fraction as the **audience gets 35% of the entire communication but misses the remaining 65%**. Hence, it's highly important to have proper body movements and posture while speaking on stage in front of an audience.

Body language is very important in all forms of communication. It helps to break the barrier of unfamiliarity and helps to form a better connect with the recipient of information.

# 3. Good Standing Postures

Most of the times when we meet people, we are standing in front of them. Be it a casual meeting on the roadside or meeting someone in the office or having a conversation with a friend at a party, many of the conversations in our life happens in a standing position.

Following are the important postures to look for while standing and having a conversation.

## Rule 1: Stand Erect

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The first point to be kept in mind is to **stand with the spine erect**. The back must be straight as this gives an impression of being tall. A taller appearance creates good impression as well. You must not slouch or hunch.

Hunching or **slouching gives an impression of laziness** and lethargy. A person won't like to approach you to talk if you appear to be weak or lethargic. **Active personality** is always preferred by people. Bad standing posture also symbolizes low self-esteem. This is not a good attribute to sport while standing.

## Rule 2: Face the Person

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The second point to remember is to **not face sideways** from your listener. Try to **stand facing the person** who you are communicating with. Standing sideways shows that you want to run away from the person and don't want to continue talking. Watch out for the same signals from the other person as well. If that person is standing sideways, please stop the conversation as soon as possible. This is because the other person is not interested in the conversation.

The best way to stand is to **direct your heart towards the other person**. Ensure that your heart faces the heart of the other person without any obstruction in between. Standing with arms crossed over the chest is also a big 'No'. It is **better to stand akimbo or with your hands over your waist**. Having **crossed arms symbolizes defensive position** or introvert nature. This type of attitude is seldom liked by people and it puts most of the people off.

## Rule 3: Free Your Hands

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The third point to be careful about is to **not put your hands inside your pockets**, while talking to someone. This posture shows disrespect. Keeping hands in the pocket shows that a person is not interested to talk. Remember that arms are the vocal chords of body language and can speak volumes about your attitude and interest.

## Rule 4: Look into the Eyes

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The fourth point to be careful about is to **look into the eyes of the other person** without intimidating him or her. If you keep looking away from the other person, it will show lack of interest in the conversation on your part. Keep looking for these signs in the other person too. Perhaps, the other person is looking away from you for most of the time. That will mean that the person is not engrossed in you and hence, it is better to let the person go.

## Rule 5: Move, Yet Mind Your Limbs

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Last but not the least; it is okay to **have some limb movements**. Moving hands to a certain extent shows your interest in the conversation and your excitement levels too. **Don't fret too much with hands**, and try to keep your palms open. You should also stand with your legs apart. Don't fiddle with your nose using your fingers because that symbolizes shyness and lack of confidence. Moreover, the **legs must not be crossed**. Crossed legs signify uncertainty and closed nature.

# 4. Good Sitting Postures

A lot of conversations happen while sitting as well. Job interviews, group discussions, or even candid talk with friends happen a lot while sitting in a restaurant, café or library. A lot of attention needs to be given to body language while having a conversation in the sitting position.

## Rule 1: Face the Person

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**Always face towards the other person** while speaking. Like in standing posture, here too, try to face your heart towards the heart of the other person. **Don't sit sideways** unless necessary.

Also keep looking out for such signs in the other person. If the other person is sitting sideways for some considerable amount of time, it is better to drop out of the conversation as the other person is not interested.

## Rule 2: Look into the Eyes

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The second point is to **maintain direct eye contact** with the other person. Look into the eyes of the other person without intimidating him or her.

## Rule 3: Mind Your Legs

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The third point to focus on is the movement of legs. Since legs are far away from our eyes, we usually forget to keep the legs in check. Too much **leg movement is not a good sign**. Juggling of the legs show lack of interest in the ongoing activity and a longing to escape from it.

## Rule 4: Don't Slouch

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The fourth point to take care of is to **not hunch or slouch** while sitting. **During a job interview, don't place your arms over the desk** and don't lean forward. The **feet must be placed firm on the ground** and must not be juggling at all. The **spine must be straight** and head must be held high. However, when you are having a candid conversation with friends, it is fine to place your arms over the desk and to lean forward. That shows your interest in what the other person is saying.

While sitting, **avoid massaging your head**, ears or forehead. Doing so signifies vulnerability and uneasiness.

## Rule 5: Scream of Importance

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While sitting during any conversation, don't restrict your legs to a small space. **Try to spread out your legs** a little. It shows that you occupy some space and that you are in charge.

During group discussions, it is a **bad gesture for a man to keep one's legs crossed**. However, ladies can sit with legs crossed without any issue. During interviews, it is preferred to **sit with uncrossed legs** as it signifies openness and acceptance.

# 5. The Proper Handshake

Handshakes are an indispensable part of our lives. Day in and day out, we meet friends and colleagues with whom we are supposed to shake hands. Handshakes are as old as the human civilization. In Roman times, the practice of lower arm grasp was followed as a way to check if the other person has concealed a dagger under the sleeves. Slowly, this converted to a form of common greeting and then, it eventually turned into the modern day handshake.

Shaking hands has a lot of Do's and Don'ts. **You should not always offer a handshake to a stranger.** Handshake is a sign of welcoming people. If you are unsure whether you are welcome at one place or not, it is better to not go for a handshake. Salespeople can be observed taking care of this all the while they meet a new person. They resort to a simple head-nod rather than initiating a handshake. A handshake **should not convey dominance or submission.** What it should actually show is **equality.** Let's take a quick look at some of the common handshake customs around the world and their features.

## The Equality Handshake

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Whenever you shake hands, it's interpreted as a subtle symbolic power struggle between you and the other person. In short, the palm of either of those involved in the handshake must neither be facing down nor facing up.

For a proper handshake, the **palms of both the individuals must be in vertical position.** Then, both the people must **apply the same pressure.** If you find that the pressure you are applying is greater or lesser than the other person, then you need to modulate your pressure accordingly.

## The Submissive Handshake

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The submissive handshake happens when your palm is facing up and is below the palm of the other person. This is called "palm up thrust". This makes you look submissive. **Don't let the other person get an upper hand at the handshake.**

## The Dominant Handshake

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The opposite of submissive handshake is the dominant handshake. This happens when you place your arm above the palm of the other person and hence, your palm is facing down. This is called "**palm down thrust**". This handshake conveys authority and dominance on your part. Don't let the world think that you are submissive just because your palms are placed over the palm of the other person.



## The Double Handler Handshake

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When a person presents you with a palm down thrust, respond with your hand in the palm up position and then apply your second hand to make his palm straight. It is considered to be one of the most powerful handshakes in the world as it symbolizes sincerity and a strong bond between the two people involved in the handshake. This handshake is also called as the **politician's handshake**, since politicians use this type of handshake a lot.

## The Wet Fish Handshake

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This is one of the worst handshakes in the world. In this handshake, the hands are cold and sweaty. This is perceived as a weak handshake and the person giving such a handshake is considered to be of weak character and to be lacking commitment.

## The Vice Handshake

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The vice handshake is another much loathed handshake around the world. This handshake is done by a palm up thrust and then a stronghold of the other person's hands followed by vigorous hand movements. The strokes are so hard that it appears the person giving such a handshake is too **authoritative and dominant**.



## The Bone Breaker Handshake

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In the bone breaker handshake, the person giving this handshake grips the hand of the other person and grinds it with his hands. This handshake **signifies aggressive personality** and should not be used at all.

## The Fingertip Handshake

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One of the most hated types of handshakes is the fingertip handshake. In this type of handshake, the two people merely touch the fingertips of each other and give a very slight stroke or may even miss the stroke. This handshake conveys **lack of confidence** and **lack of self-esteem**. This is a handshake observed many a times during job interviews. Even before the interview begins, this type of handshake puts off the interviewer and the interviewee's impression goes for a toss.

## The Straight Finger Handshake

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In this type of handshake, the person giving the hand has all his fingers straight. It is a very bad and rude gesture not to clasp the palm of the other person, as it shows lack of interest in the meeting and repulsion towards the other person. Always remember to clasp the hands of the other person during a handshake and give it a proper stroke.

### Important Tips

- It should be noted that after giving a handshake, one should not hold or touch the arm of the person with the other hand. It is a mark of patronizing, which is not seen in good light by people across the world. Only people who are at a higher authority can do so.
- One's hands should not be sweaty or wet while giving a handshake. It is quite unprofessional and rude to have clammy hands while giving a handshake.
- You should stand straight or you can bend a little to show respect while shaking hands. It is always to be noted that the palms and the hands must be vertical while giving the handshake, so as to signify equality.

# 6. Proper Hand Movements

Hand movements are quite involuntary in nature. However, they tell us a lot about the other person who is using his or her hands while talking. There are rules for positive body language even in case of movement of hands.

## Rule 1: Open Your Palms

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The first rule is to have an open palm always. **Open palms signify openness and acceptance.** Open palms also signify **honesty** and **sincerity**. However, there is a way to read the open palms as well. If the palms are open while talking but are faced downwards, it signifies a bit of authoritative attitude of the person. This is visible especially in case of handshakes, as we saw in the previous chapter.

However, if the palms are open and are facing upwards, then it is a non-threatening sign. This person is approachable and can be seen as friendly in nature. The turn of palms, hence, completely alters the way others perceive us.

## Rule 2: Uncross the Arms

---

While speaking, the arms should not be crossed and the hands must not be clasped. **Clasped hands show lack of commitment and lack of confidence.** Crossed arms show defensive or nervous position. It has also been observed that if a person stands with his arms crossed, then he grasps much less of the conversation as compared to a person with open arms. Moreover, defensive body language also leads to lower retention power.

It is in our common nature to cross our arms so as to feel comfortable. However, studies have shown that such a body language is perceived as negative by people. Moreover, **clenched fists are also a big no** during conversations. The arms should not go below the waist level and must always be raised above the waist while speaking. The arms can occasionally go down but it should not be so throughout the conversation.

## Rule 3: Don't Grip Your Arms

---

While speaking to someone, **don't grip your arms** by crossing them. It is a sign of insecurity. Always **avoid holding your arms together** in front of your groin area, as it shows insecurity as well. It is called the **Broken Zipper position**. This is one posture that shows insecurity and submission at the same time and hence, must be avoided at all costs.

**Don't keep adjusting your cuff links** in the public as it again shows you are too much concerned about your insecurities of coming out in public. The ladies must make a note that they should not clutch their handbags close to themselves as they talk as it shows their defensive position and their insecure nature.

## Rule 4: Zero Arm Barriers

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When you are in a restaurant, don't clutch your coffee mug close to your chest. There should be **no arm barrier** when you talking to another person. Keep an open body language and hold the coffee mug at a side.

## **Rule 5: Parallel Over Perpendicular**

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In group discussions, it is a mandate that if you have to point towards someone, don't use the arm that will be perpendicular to them. Use the other arm that can point to them and can be parallel to your chest too. Having the arm perpendicular to your chest to point out to others is generally a rude gesture. Always try to **have the arm parallel to the body**.

Arms and hands have to be used carefully in conversations. The movement of your arms and hands can make or mar your discussion and can alter the outcomes significantly.

# 7. Crossed Legs Etiquettes

Legs are far from our eyes and hence, there are high chances that they get ignored by us during our conversations. However, they do convey a lot of information about our emotions and feelings all the time.

The movement of hands and head certainly contributes to the art of positive body language. However, legs do have their own importance and must be maintained in proper positions. Let's take a look at what different types of leg crosses imply.

## The Standing Leg Cross

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The standing leg cross is a **body gesture of defiance, defensiveness and submission**. This is the posture that is mostly adopted by people when they meet others who are complete strangers.

The standing leg cross symbolizes denial to access to the genitals. This is the reason why this posture is considered to be defensive in nature. Hence, such a gesture shows that the person is not confident of oneself, or in other words, lacks self-confidence.

For women, it shows that she wants to stay in the conversation but access to her is denied. In the case of men, it again signifies that the man wants to stay in the conversation but he also wants to ensure that he is not open to everybody's access.

Hence, the next time, even if someone looks to be friendly in conversation and having relaxed facial expressions along with proper hand movements, but crossed leg position, please note that the person is not as confident or relaxed as he or she is trying to appear.

Always remember the following mantra:

- **Open legs:** Confidence
- **Closed or crossed legs:** Reticence

If a person in front of you is talking to you candidly and yet has this posture, it is better to leave and put the person at ease. This is because the person is actually not that comfortable talking to you as he/she is portraying.

## The Double Cross

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The double cross happens when the person concerned crosses both the legs and arms. This shows that the person is totally uninterested in speaking to you. Such people are **not receptive to communication** and hence, it is better either to create a quick rapport with them or leave.

## Figure Four Leg Clamp

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In this posture, the person locks his one leg over the other and places both his hands on to the raised leg. This gesture shows that the person is totally disinterested in us and is **stubborn in attitude**. This gesture also signifies that the person is tough minded and does not respect others' opinion. He is just concerned about his own opinions.

## The Ankle Lock

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In this posture, the person locks the ankles together. The palms may be clenched in a fist or may be placed on the legs or may be even clutching a chair. This gesture shows that the person is hiding some negative emotion, like anxiety or fear or doubt.

Such type of body language is usually seen with people who are being charged for some crime or being produced in a court for hearing. This is one posture that should be avoided as well.

## The Leg Twine

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In this posture, one of the legs is raised and is locked around the other leg. This is a gesture of shyness and timidity. This one gesture is exclusive to women and is symbolic of insecurity.

## Parallel Legs

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This is one leg posture that should be adopted by women. It is hardly ever seen being reproduced by any male. This posture gives women a healthier and more attractive look and projects a powerful signal of femininity. This leg posture accounts for a **positive body language, confidence and attractiveness** and is considered to be the best leg posture for women. It also gives a youthful look to the ladies.

## Dominant Stand

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This is one posture that is commonly seen with men and women in the military. In this position, the person spreads the legs apart and the feet is placed firmly on the ground. This is a **posture of dominance**. This posture may look good and dignified in the armed forces, but sometimes it can also look intimidating to other people, because the person taking a dominant stand may appear to be authoritative.

## Attention Position

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This posture is generally suited for situations when a person who is junior in rank is meeting a person senior in rank. This posture conveys no commitment to stay or leave. This posture, therefore, shows that the person is **neutral towards the situation** and that they have no closed or negative opinions.

## Basic Do's and Don'ts

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Care must also be taken while sitting. Many people sit by turning the chair around and sitting on it by placing the chest on the chair's frame. This is done mainly to show that the person is occupying space and is trying to be assertive, yet it gives away an altogether opposite message. This posture shows that the person is not confident and is trying to protect himself or herself by creating a barrier between him or her and the other person.

**Tapping of foot is also a big problem** with many people that needs to be worked on. The habit of repeated foot tapping on the floor is symbolic of anxiety and impatience. When people wait to receive exam results or medical reports or anything that has a lot of uncertainty associated with it, they begin to tap their foot repeatedly.

For job interviews or group discussions, the **legs must be uncrossed and parallel** and the **feet must be placed firmly on the ground**. Women can cross their legs in the form of European leg cross, when they are in group discussions but it is a big 'No' for men to do so. Placement of legs and feet play a pivotal role in conveyance of messages of the mind and in getting selected at job interviews and group discussions.

# 8. Pleasant Facial Expressions

Facial expressions do a majority of the task of conveying information to the other person. An average person may not be able to read the body language of legs or arms. But almost everyone can read the signals displayed on the face of a person. Therefore, it is of high importance that we maintain a good and acceptable facial expression, lest we are hated by everyone for being non- approachable.

The first expression that everyone looks for in a person is the smile. Smile can be rejuvenating, yet deceptive at the same time. A woman with a tight-lipped smile that reveals no teeth is actually symbolic of her lack of interest in the conversation, although it may seem to an average person that she is engrossed in the ongoing talk.

## **An Original Smile Vs. a Fake Smile**

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There are many traits of an original smile. Whenever a person smiles naturally, without any voluntary force, wrinkles are created around the eyes. This is because in an original smile, the lip corners are pulled up and the muscles around the eyes are contracted. **In a fake smile, only lip movements happen.** People giving fake smiles smile only through their mouth and not eyes.



However, what if the person who you are talking to tries to produce a fake smile by wrinkling his or her eyes voluntarily? There is a trick to identify this as well. When a smile is genuine, the fleshy part of the eye between the eyebrow and the eyelid moves downward and the ends of the eyebrows also dip to a slight extent.





Research has proved that the more a person smiles, the more positive reaction he/she gets from the others. There is one more way to detect false smiles. When a person tries to fake a smile, the right hemisphere of the brain – the one specializing in facial expressions – sends signals only to the left side of the body. Hence, a fake smile will always be stronger on one side and weaker on the other side. However, in a genuine smile, both parts of the brain send signals and hence, the smile is equally strong on both the sides.

If the person's eyes are looking away from you, then you must realize that the person is bored of you and it is better to either change the topic of discussion or leave. However, if the lips are slightly pressed, the eyebrows are raised and there is a steady gaze of eyes at you along with the head erect or slightly pushed forward, then this implies interest of the person in you.

# 9. Walk Smart

A lot of information is conveyed not only by how you stand or how you talk, but also by how you move. The style of walking conveys a lot of information about our self-confidence and our mannerisms. This is one reason why the body language coaches teach walking styles to their students.

## Rule 1: Stand Erect and Face Up

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The first thing to keep in mind is that you should **not slouch or hunch** while walking. The back has to be straight and the **spine must be erect**. Your **head must be upright** and your eyes must be looking at the front. The **chin must be up** all the time. Most people look down while walking. This is not considered to be elegant. Moreover, if you slouch or hunch while walking, you will be considered to be weak and lacking in energy and enthusiasm.

Bad posture while walking, if continued for longer periods of time, can lead to back pain, stiff neck and other serious ailments.

## Rule 2: Use All Muscles

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It is recommended to use all your muscle groups in the legs while walking. While walking, try to visualize pushing off with your back foot using your hamstrings and quadriceps, and pushing yourself forward on to the heel of the other foot. Try to roll your foot forward, heel to toe. This helps the calf muscles to work and helps you to keep your feet at the correct angle at each step.

## Rule 3: Pull Back the Shoulders

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The next thing to keep in mind is to keep the shoulders pulled back, yet relaxed. Keeping a pulled back yet relaxed position of shoulders helps to maintain a stable and vertical column of support while you walk. Along with the straight back and chin up posture, this way of walking helps to reduce chances of injury. This posture also helps to exude confidence and strength.

While walking, the upper body also needs to come into play along with the legs. The arms have to swing properly to project confidence. The arms must move in smaller arc as you begin to walk. The faster you walk, the larger the arc must become. Movement of arms helps to gain a better stride.

## Rule 4: Get the Correct Pace

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The pace of the walk also matters a lot. While walking, the pace must be such that you can speak properly to a person while continuing your walk and should not appear breathless at the same time.

Walking smartly also involves not taking too long strides as you walk. Lengthening the gait stretches the leg muscles unnecessarily and leads to destabilization of the stride. Research has found that a little swag of the shoulders has a certain kind of sex-appeal associated with it.

While walking the hips must be level and the steps must be of equal length. You must bend your arms at 90 degrees at the elbow and swing properly with the opposite leg. This helps in gaining balance while walking. The knees must point forward and the pelvis must be tucked under the torso. The head should also not be tilted and must be held high. Last but not the least, land your heel first on the ground, and not the toe.

# 10. Proper Eye Contact

Eyes have such a huge importance in any conversation or interaction that if the language of the eyes go wrong, the entire conversation and the repute of the person goes wrong. Eyes speak a language that is inescapable from others' eyes.

Eye contact regulates conversation and hints about submission and dominance as well. What people notice about another when they meet for the first time are the eyes. And hence, **both the parties involved make quick judgments about each other based on the eyes.** Eyes are hence, the medium of conveying information about other people's attitudes and thoughts.

Let us look at some of the messages conveyed by the eyes.

## The Dilating and Contracting of Pupils

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**When someone gets excited, the pupils get dilated** and can actually dilate up to four times the original size. Conversely, **when a person is angry or in any other negative mood, the pupils contract.** Hence, if you find that the other person's pupils have dilated, it means the person is interested in you or in your talk. But if the pupils have contracted, then it is better to understand that the person is not interested.

## The Eyebrow Flash

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In almost every culture, a long distance "hello" is conveyed by the quick rise and fall of the eyebrow. This is called as the eyebrow flash. The split second movement of the eyebrow is a way of greeting each other. However, in Japan, **it has a negative connotation** and hence, must not be used with Japanese people.

## The Game of Eyebrows

**The raising of eyebrows during conversation implies submission.** On the other hand, **the lowering of eyebrows signifies dominance.** Those people who intentionally raise their eyebrows are found to appear submissive and those who lower their eyebrows are generally considered to be aggressive.

There is one catch here. When ladies lower their eyelids and raise their eyebrows at the same time, it conveys sexual submissiveness. This expression must, hence, be avoided in formal and corporate environments.

It is always recommended that a person must maintain eye contact with the other person to show a level of interest and intent. However, if you keep on looking at the other person for a long time, it may put the other person at some discomfort. The other person may be intimidated by your gaze. In most cultures, it has been found that to build a good rapport with the other person, **your gaze must meet the other person's gaze for about 60% to 70% of the time.** If you keep gazing at them with interest, the other people will think that you like them and hence, they will reciprocate with their gaze as well.

However, if you find that the other person is not looking at you for a certain period of time and is rather looking away from you continuously, then the conversation needs to end or the topic of the conversation has to change.

If you are unsure of how long you must look at the other person, the safest bet is to look at the other person for the time he or she is looking at you. Looking away during an interrogation also gives away the cue that the person is lying.

## The Sideways Glance

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The sideways glance can be perceived as an expression of interest or even hostility. When a sideways glance is combined with a smile or slightly raised eyebrows, it can communicate interest and is also a famous courtship signal. However, if the sideways glance is combined with a frown, downturned eyebrows and downturned lips, it can convey suspicion, criticism, or even hostility.

## The Magic of Blinking

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The rate at which your eyes blink is also a conveyor of valuable information. If you are interested in someone or someone's talk, you will not bat your eyelid as often. However, if you are not interested in someone, your rate of blinking the eyes will increase dramatically. **Increase in the blinking rate of the eyes conveys disinterest or boredom.**

## The Dart

If the eyes of the other person begin to dart from one side to the other, it implies that the person has lost interest in you and is looking for escape routes to get rid of you. This reveals the other person's insecurity.

## The Authority Gaze

One way to exude authority is to lower your eyebrows, narrow the eyelids and focus closely on the other person. This gives an impression of what predators do before attacking their prey. The blinking rate has to decrease and there must be a constant focus on the other person's eyes.

Eye contact and eye movements are an important part of our communication skills and also our body language. Hence, it is of utmost importance to maintain a decent eye contact with the other person, without intimidating him or her. Eye contact plays a significant role in sales interviews, job interviews, and in casual conversations as well.

# 11. Mind Your Fingers

Even if the eyes, arms, and legs are at a proper place, the fingers can still play a spoilsport. The hands and the fingers together give away a lot of information about us and the other people as well. Moreover, when we speak with our hand gestures and finger movements, it is easier for the other person to retain what we have spoken about. Hence, hand movements help in retention of messages too. Let us take a look at the different hand gestures that are commonly observed around the world.

## Rubbing of Palms

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**The rubbing of palms against each other is perceived to be a sign of expectancy.** Rubbing of palms together is symbolic of having expectation of positive outcomes. This expression is quite common in sales pitch as well. The sales teams of many organizations tell about an offer to other people using folded hands and palms rubbing against each other.

Rubbing the palms at a faster rate shows that the person is thinking of the benefits for the other and is an apparently good-natured person. But a slow rub of hands with a smile conveys that the intentions are devious and the person is selfish.

## Thumb and Finger Rub

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The rubbing of fingers and the thumb against each other shows that the person has an expectancy of getting money. This is one reason why this gesture must be used with caution in front of people.

## Clenched Hands

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People who stand or sit with **clenched fists convey frustration**. People adopt clenched fists when they are anxious, angry or fed up with something, but are trying to restrain themselves. The clenched fists can conceal the negative feelings of the person when the person is losing some deal or is not feeling good about his current experience.

## The Steeple

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The steeple is the gesture which a person gives by placing his fingers of one hand over the fingers of the other hand and forming a church steeple. This gesture shows confidence and can also exude authority, and in many cases, superiority.

This gesture needs to be avoided if you want to persuade someone, as it can give a wrong signal that you are trying to be haughty and are trying to impose your thoughts rather than trying to convince.

## The Face Platter

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The face platter is a positive body gesture in which a person, especially a lady, places the fingers of one hand over those of the other and then places her chin on the combination of fingers. This is used to increase one's appeal and is a way to present one's face to the other.

## Holding Hands Back

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**Holding hands back is a way to show superiority, power, and confidence**, and is often adopted by royal families, police force, or the military. Along with a straight back and chin held up, it shows that the person holds authority and deserves awe and respect. This posture is recommended to those people who feel tensed during job interviews.

If one hand grips the wrist of the other hand, it conveys frustration and an attempt of self-control. As the hand climbs the other hand from the wrist, the level of frustration being exuded increases. If a person holds his arm with the other hand, it means that the frustration level of the person is higher.

One also needs to be cautious about the display of thumb in public. If your thumb protrudes out of your waistcoat or your pocket, it is symbolic of aggressive attitude and dominance. This gesture is usually adopted by people of higher social stature.

If a person has kept his hands inside the back pockets and the thumbs are protruding, then it shows that the person is trying to hide some feeling from us. Some people close their arms and yet, keep displaying their thumbs. That is again, a way to show dominance along with showing that he/she is closed to conversations.

# 12. Detecting Liars

In this world of ever-growing deceit and lies, it is very important to know when a person is lying. Catching lies is not that a difficult task provided you know what you need to look for to spot liars.

**Taking gulps and covering one's mouth** does not necessarily show that the person is lying. But it does show that some information is being hidden. A liar always lacks congruence in his facial expressions. When a person lies, the subconscious part of the brain sends out nervous signals that appear as a gesture, thus contradicting what the person has just been speaking. Many people scratch their nose or twitch their ears or even rub their nose. Many a times, **a split second sneer appears** on one side of a person's face, showing that the person is lying or is being sarcastic about what he is telling.

It has also been found that **attractive people are found to be more believed** in public and hence, many a times, attractive people can get off with lies without being detected or questioned at all.

Let us take a look at some of the most common lying gestures in the world.

## The Covered Mouth

This is mostly observed in kids. The person covers his or her mouth while speaking a lie. It is an involuntary act of stopping the deceitful words from coming out of the mouth. The mouth can be covered using a few fingers, using the palm(s) or even using a fist. Some people also try to disguise this act by giving a fake cough. This also shows that the person is trying to conceal some information.

## The Nose Touch

Liars are mostly found to give a quick touch to their nose while lying. It can be a few hasty rubs or even an indiscernible touch of the nose. This gesture must be read along with the other gestures being mentioned here. Sometimes, people suffering from cold and cough can also touch their nose in the same manner and hence, must not be considered as liars.

## The Nose Itch

While lying, the body releases chemicals called catecholamines, which cause the tissues inside the nose to swell. The increased blood pressure makes the nose to swell and causes the nerve endings inside the nose to tingle, thus makes it itchy. Hence, when a person lies, he or she feels an increased necessity to satisfy the itch by continuously stroking the nose.

## Scratching the Neck

Liars have a tendency to scratch at their necks as well. It is visibly not an actual itch in the neck as an actual itch will need some significant number of rubs on the neck. But liars just scratch their necks around four to five times and they tend to repeat it many times.

## Grabbing the Ears

Liars also feel some kind of tingling in the ears. Research has found that liars feel a heightened tendency to scratch their ears when they are lying.



## **Rubbing the Eyes**

When a person lies, he or she tends to look away from the person being lied to. Thus, the liar feels a tendency to rub one's eye to block the sight of the other person. This is again one of the acts that hints the person being a liar.

## **Pulling Collars**

The act of lying leads to heightened fear and increased blood pressure, which leads to more sweating. This leads the liars to feel the heat at their neck and pull their collars every now and then.

## **Putting Fingers in Mouth**

When people are lying, they tend to appear in discomposure. To hide their emotions and their sense of guilt, they tend to put their fingers in mouth, which is an attempt to appear serious.

# 13. Voice Control

The way you talk to others matters a lot in building a rapport with them. To look civilized and to also generate interest in other people, it is required for a person to master the following fundamentals:

- Pace
- Pause
- Pitch

The voluntary variation of these parameters is called the “**voice modulation**”. Pace is the number of words being spoken per unit of time, like number of words per minute. Pause is the number of seconds or any other unit of time that appears between two words or two phrase or two sentences. Pitch is the rate of vibration or the frequency of the sound wave. Voice modulation helps to make use of all the three parameters and blend them to make an adorable voice.

## Pace

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To have a good voice, one needs to have an appropriate pace at which one speaks. Pace is subjective. What is required is that each and every word must be clear when spoken and must not wrap over the previous or the next word.

## Pause

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A pause of 2 seconds is called a short pause. A pause of more than 2 seconds is considered to be a long pause. Pauses can play a significant role in driving a point and also to bring humor. The speaker must give a pause of 2 seconds after every sentence. A comma is equivalent of 1 quick count, a semi-colon is equivalent of 2 quick counts and a period is equivalent of 3 quick counts. This is the way a person must manage the pauses between his words, phrases, and sentences.

## Pitch

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Pitch has to be such that the voice appears pleasant to the ears. Too low a pitch and too high a pitch is never liked by people. Whenever something serious or tragic is being spoken about, the pitch must be low. The things that are associated with joy or surprise can be spoken about in a high-pitched tone.

The loudness of the person must match the loudness of the other person or people involved in the conversation. If the other person is speaking in a low volume, it is unwise to keep the volume high then.

Putting some pressure over the words and syllables helps to give importance to those words and helps to carve out the meaning of the words more effectively.

While speaking the lips must move properly. Otherwise, the speaker looks as if he/she is mumbling. Articulation of words in an effective manner is extremely important to be able to speak well.

## Examples of Pause

There is a way in which pause brings humor. The following examples show it well. Please note that “...” means a pause of 2 seconds.

- *How many of you know that, thanks to me, my colleague is expecting ... a hike in her salary?”*
- *Yesterday, I realized, that my girlfriend is hot ... tempered!*

Pause helps to emphasize on your message too. Take for instance the following statement. “..” means a pause of 1 second.

- *The world is going to be hotter ... hotter ... and hotter with each passing year.*

Practicing yoga and doing pranayama can help in gaining control over breath, which can help us to speak from the diaphragm and hence, make our pitch and volume better.

# 14. Safe Space

**Safe space or personal space or space bubble is the distance one needs to maintain while accosting a person without intimidating him.** Safe space is the space that a person is entitled to around him or her and which no one should intrude into. It is all about maintaining a proper distance with a person. Safe space is specific to every country and can vary from culture to culture.

Personal space varies with culture as well. A person who has been brought up in a densely populated area, like Bangladesh, may have a narrower personal space as compared to a person who has been brought up in a sparsely populated area, like Norway. Personal space is like a layer all around us that extends to a particular distance from the body and that no one should enter it. If some stranger intrudes into our personal space, we become infuriated.

Now, there are three types of spaces around an individual. The kinds of spaces are classified as follows.

## **Intimate Space**

Intimate space varies from 6 inches to 18 inches. This is kind of a person's own territory or own property which no one must enter into. Only a handful of people, like the parents, lovers, close friends, or pets are allowed to enter.

## **Personal Space**

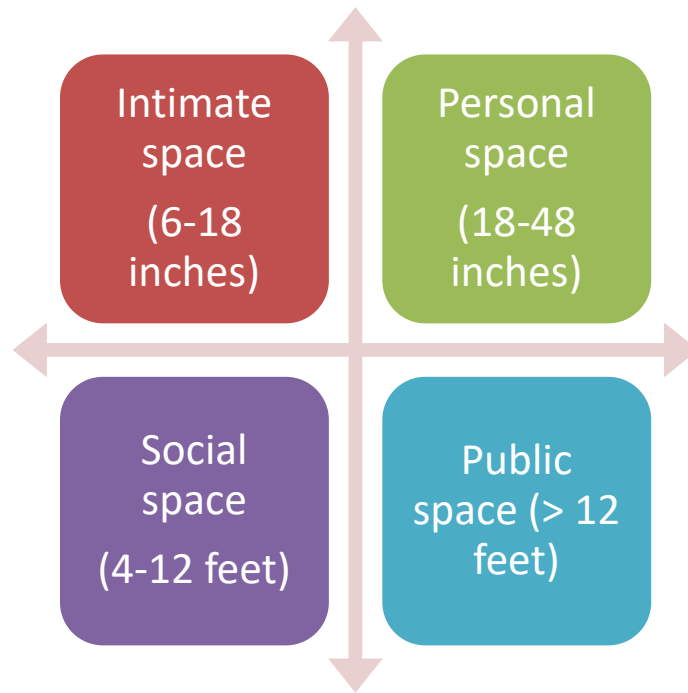
The personal space can extend from 18 inches to 48 inches. This is the distance at which the other friends – the not-so-intimate ones – and colleagues need to stand at during functions, parties, and ceremonies.

## **Social Space**

The social space extends from 4 feet to 12 feet from a person. This is the area in which all the strangers like sales person, carpenter, pizza boy, etc. need to stand. Anyone who is a new acquaintance needs to stand in this space.

## **Public Space**

The public space extends from beyond the 12 feet. This is the distance at which all those people must stand, who don't have business with us. During public speaking, this is the distance at which the public or the audience must be placed.



The above classification does not intend to discourage hair dressers, doctors, or body examiners to stand aside. These non-threatening people will have to enter our intimate space and we will have to allow them as well. However, whenever you are talking to another person, you need to assess the level of intimacy you have with the other person and then decide how close you should get.

# 15. Mirroring

Mirroring others is one way we tend to build rapport with others. Research has found that when people do something, the others surrounding him are kind of compelled to do the same act. Suppose you are walking on a footpath. You suddenly stop and start looking upwards. It is not hard to believe and even to witness, that the people following you will also slow down their pace and will look up towards the sky.

**One of the most famous examples of mirroring is the yawn.** When people yawn, it kind of induces a yawn in the others as well. Another good example of mirroring is a smile or a laugh. When a person begins to laugh, it becomes so contagious that the people surrounding him/her also begin to laugh or smile.

Mirroring is another reason why queues help to manage people well. When a person is in a queue, he or she does not get unruly as others are obeying the rules and not breaking the queue. This has a '**sympiosis**' kind of effect. A research found that when men dress similarly, they tend to make better friends.

Mirroring makes others feel at ease. It is hence, considered to be a **powerful rapport building tool**. In fact, when someone begins to mirror you, it shows that the person is in sync with you and likes your company. A clever way to gauge the interest level of a person is to do some action and observe if the other person is mimicking you or not.

Research shows that women are instinctively more inclined towards mirroring other women than men are inclined to mirror other men. Men also don't tend to mirror other women too often, except when they are in mood of courtship.

Research shows that **when man mirrors another woman, the woman finds the man more appealing, caring, and attractive**. This leads to an altogether different sex appeal of men. **Men find it harder to mirror others and women are better with the mirroring act.**

Mirroring can also be seen when we see people who have been in long-term relationship. When people stay in longer relationships, they begin to look and behave similar. Mirroring also shows that each person respects the other. Mirroring plays a significant role while speaking. During a conversation, people should mirror the voice, pitch, pause and volume of the other person.

# 16. Seating Arrangements

In a job interview, it is always preferred that two people should sit facing each other on either of the parallel sides of the table. This is the configuration which is required even during competitive games like chess or playing cards. However, **when a person is counseling someone closely or is teaching something, it is advised to sit in an L shaped position**, with you sitting at right angles to the other person.

On a table, two people **sit at diagonally opposite positions to convey non-involvement and independence**. This is one permutation that is often seen in libraries. When people have to co-operate with each other on some task, they sit side by side on the same side of the table.

**To sit facing each other on either sides of the table shows a competitive position** or a position of serious discussion. It is said that in the competitive position, communication is the least and retention of messages is the lowest.

Hence, **whenever three or more people are involved, it is always better to go for a round table**. The round table removes any edges or corners and disrupts the tilt of power on one side. In a round table, the power gets distributed well at all places and hence, is found to be suitable for group discussions and design thinking activities.