



BODY TALK

Here is another of our useful tips and advice for both employers and prospective employees. In this issue, we look at 'Body Language' and how eyes, body and posture can say so much more about a person than the spoken word.

Silent body language reveals, as nothing else can, the trustworthiness, enthusiasm and sincerity of the speaker as well as his feelings about whoever is receiving his message.

There are two types of body expression: - **ACTIVE** and **PASSIVE**.

ACTIVE: Facial or body movements that reveal a willingness to communicate or an empathy with the other party.

PASSIVE: Facial or body movements that show an unwillingness to communicate or negative feelings towards the other party.

The use of the eyes in face-to-face conversation is probably the best signal of a listener's active or passive attitude. Eye contact has three functions:

- Monitoring the behaviour of the other participant
- Regulating the progress of the interaction
- Controlling the expressions of mutual associations

Facial expressions communicate emotion. They take the form of smiles, frowns, eye twitches, nose wrinkles, eyebrow lifts, flushing or blanching. Such expressions can show respect or dominance, joy or sadness, fear or happiness, surprise or disappointment, love or hate, interest or boredom, disgust or approval.

Body motions or gestures communicate understanding or lack of it. When communicators like or are in agreement with each other, their bodies tend to move at the same time or rate, or in some similar manner. Passive listeners may scratch their chin, run their fingers through their hair, wipe their forehead, look at the ceiling or play with their watch to reduce their anxiety.

Posture communicates attitude. When people are negotiating they will sit closer to the table if they are pleased with the progress of the talks and farther from the table if they are unhappy. Posture can convey alertness, boredom, disgust, eagerness, enthusiasm and energy – or lack of it.