

Body Language in an Interview: The Basics

Body language is a very complex topic. It can reveal your true feelings to others and can reveal theirs to you. Your body language can also be manipulated to hide your true feelings or to give off confidence, for example.

In an interview body language is very important as it helps the interviewer decide whether to hire you or not. Here are the basics to help you sell yourself in an interview.

Don't:

- Rub the back of your head or neck. Even if you really do just have a cramp in your neck, these gestures make you look disinterested.
- Rub or touch your nose. This suggests that you're not being completely honest, and it's gross.
- Sit with your arms folded across your chest. You'll appear unfriendly and disengaged.
- Cross your legs and idly shake one over the other. It's distracting and shows how uncomfortable you are.
- Lean your body towards the door. You'll appear ready to make a mad dash for the door.
- Slouch back in your seat. This will make you appear disinterested and unprepared.
- Stare back blankly. This is a look people naturally adopt when they are trying to distance themselves.

Do:

- Sit up straight, and lean slightly forward in your chair. In addition to projecting interest and engagement in the interaction, aligning your body's position to that of the interviewer's shows admiration and agreement.
- Show your enthusiasm by keeping an interested expression. Nod and make positive gestures in moderation to avoid looking like a bobblehead.

- Establish a comfortable amount of personal space between you and the interviewer. Invading personal space (anything more than 20 inches) could make the interviewer feel uncomfortable and take the focus away from your conversation.
- Limit your application of colognes and perfumes. Invading aromas can arouse allergies. Being the candidate that gave the interviewer a headache isn't going to do anything in your favour.
- If you have more than one person interviewing you at once, make sure you briefly address both people with your gaze (without looking like a tennis spectator) and return your attention to the person who has asked you a question.
- Interruptions can happen. If they do, refrain from staring at your interviewer while they address their immediate business and motion your willingness to leave if they need privacy.
- Stand up and smile even if you are on a phone interview. Standing increases your level of alertness and allows you to become more engaged in the conversation.



Don't fold your arms, fidget or slouch.



Smile, lean slightly forward and shake hands.

