

**BODY LANGUAGE IS A WAY OF COMMUNICATION**

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Language, culture and communication are an integral part of each person. People constantly travel and contact with each other. We want to tell about such a kind of dialogue as body language. Presently this way of nonverbal communication is very extensive.

Body language is an important part of communication which can constitute 50% or more of what we communicate. If you wish to communicate well, then it makes sense to understand how you can (and cannot) use your body to say what you mean.

Russians and Belarusians are a very demonstrative people, and some public physical contact is common. Hugs, backslapping, kisses on the cheeks and other expansive gestures are common among friends or acquaintances and between members of the same sex.

Russians stand close while talking.

Putting your thumb through your index and middle fingers or making the "OK" sign is considered very rude gestures in Russia.

It used to be that the study of body language across cultures was an academic pursuit interesting but not really vital in the course of daily living. Now, however, with the process of globalization and greater exposure to diverse cultures, understanding differences in body language can have a huge impact on many aspects of work, business, and personal life.

There are some examples of cultural differences. Cultural differences in body language may show up in a wide variety of ways, such as the amount of physical touch, the conversational distance between people, the interactions between same genders, the interactions between different genders, and the like.

For example, some cultures are very expressive when it comes to physical touch. Think about Italy where a big hug and kiss on each cheek is considered a common and acceptable greeting, and then compare it to Japan where a proper greeting consists of a respectful bow and no touch at all.

Personal space and comfort distances are very personal, of course, but they also are influenced by cultural expectations. In South America, for instance, personal space and comfort distances tend to be quite small. People stand very close to each other to talk, even when they don't know each other very well. Go to the United States, though, and personal space becomes much larger; people are not as comfortable when others stand close to them, especially if they are not very well acquainted.

One of the gestures of body language is eye contact. In the United States and Canada, intermittent eye contact is extremely important in conveying interest and attention. In many Middle Eastern cultures, intense eye contact between the same genders is often a symbol of trust and sincerity however, between opposite genders, especially in Muslim cultures, anything more than brief eye contact is considered inappropriate. Additionally, in Asian, African, and Latin American cultures, extended eye contact is considered a "challenge." The Japanese tend to consider even brief eye contact uncomfortable. And, in some cultures, a woman should look down when talking to a man (thanks to thank Denise Gerdes, a former Peace Corps volunteer from Minnesota for that information).

One of forms of display of body language is the touching. This is a big no-no. It may look okay, but you could be fooled. For example, did you know that in some sects of Judaism, the only woman that a man will touch in his lifetime is the woman he is married to? In Japan, Scandinavia, and England, touching is less frequent. In Latino cultures, touching is encouraged. This may not have a place in this article, but still interesting: never touch a person's head. This can be religiously offensive. Really, when you are out networking, just don't touch – except to shake hands. If you are comfortable, let the other person guide what is appropriate to them.

Display of language of a body is expressed in smiles. Smiles are an important facial expression. They show interest, excitement, empathy, concern; they create an upbeat, positive environment. Smiles can, however, be overused. Often, men smile when they are pleased; women smile to please. You know which is the most powerful!

Body language is reflected in a facial expression. A simple smile can make others feel more at ease where a frown can make people see that you are aggressive or unsure of something. We use facial expressions to get our points across in the right context. For example, your message would suffer if you were saying how angry you were with a huge smile.

Body language is an important aspect of any conversation skill people practise. People can interpret body signals better than they can talk most of the time.

The two most important ideas taken away from this article are to know about these differences and treat others in the way you would like to be treated. Once again, the best policy is to let the other person lead the interaction if you are unsure. That way, you can never be wrong!

### **Literature references**

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