

Body language

How you move — especially at a job interview — can win or cost you the job

By Lisa Evans



how to write a flawless resumé and craft brilliant answers to questions about education and experience, Youssef also incorporates lessons in appropriate body language into her teachings and says she's witnessed the positive impact nonverbal communication can have on a candidate's success in an interview.

Have a job interview coming up? Follow these tips and perfect your interview body language, from the moment you enter the door to the final goodbye.

Waiting patiently

Youssef says your body language in the waiting room is as important as body language in the interview. "If you're sitting upright with your chest up and head up, not fidgeting and being free from technological devices, it looks like you're ready," she says. A relaxed, slouched posture with your head down reading a magazine or sending a text on your phone can send the interviewer the impression that you're disinterested and disengaged before you even have the opportunity to answer any questions about your skills and qualifications.

Bowden says human resources professionals often say they know the right candidate for the job as soon as they walk into the room, but struggle to explain what it

Lack of Canadian experience is the most common reason newcomers get and give for why they can't get ahead in the Canadian labour market. Another reason is insufficient English communication skills. While there is truth to these things, there is a subtler reason you may be failing to make the

language or credentials.

"Nonverbal communication can have a big impact on your professional life. We make judgments about other people instantly," says Mark Bowden, Toronto-based body language expert and author of *Winning Body Language*.

This becomes especially cru-

resumé would be sufficient to land a job, but after studying up on interviewing skills, she came across some research that stated that body language was perhaps an even more important skill.

"I didn't realize how impactful it could be in terms of how others perceive you," she says. Youssef currently works at the Vancouver

“ Nonverbal communication can have a big impact on your professional life.”

— Mark Bowden

right impression with potential employers — your nonverbal communication. In other words, how you carry yourself and what message that sends regardless of

cial when networking in person or at a face-to-face job interview. When Natalie Youssef immigrated to Canada from Australia in 2010, she thought a refined

YMCA as a program facilitator and now coaches youth on developing interviewing skills. While many employment programs across the country emphasize

was about the person that they found so attractive. "They've got a whole bunch of instinctual feelings about the person that are a direct result of a person's body

language," he says. You don't want to give someone a negative feeling before you even get to shake their hand.

Sitting in a comfortable position

Once in the interview room, sit in a comfortable position that ensures you avoid fidgeting. Placing both feet firmly on the ground can help you to concentrate as the body is trained to utilize both hemispheres of the brain when you're in this seated position. While crossing legs is an acceptable behaviour if this makes you feel comfortable, be aware of which direction your legs are facing. "[If your legs are crossed] far away from the interviewer, it can look as though you're desperate to go in the opposite direction," says Bowden.

Invading personal space?

Be conscious of how much space there is between you and the interviewer. Bowden recommends placing some space between your body and the desk to avoid crowding the interviewer. If you're at a small desk, placing your hands on the desk too close to the interviewer's papers, for example, can make them feel that you're invading their personal space and will cause an unconscious reaction in their brain that identifies you as a threat, immediately causing them to dislike you without knowing why. "They'll justify it later saying there was something in your resumé they didn't like, but really it's because you made them nervous when your hand was too close to their coffee cup," says Bowden.

Gesturing and hand placement

At the same time, avoid sitting on your hands or hiding them in your lap. Bowden recommends keeping hands at belly button height in an area he calls the "truth plane" and confining gestures within that area.

"When people get excited they tend to gesture at chest height," says Bowden. This causes your heart rate to increase and can make speech more rapid, giving the impression that you're easily excitable. By con-

trast, dropping your hands to your side can make you appear dejected. Keeping gestures confined to the naval area conveys that you're calm and assertive. Gesturing is a great communication tool that shows you're connected and passionate, but you want your gestures to help you, not harm you. Avoid gesturing wildly, keeping your movements controlled and predictable.

The head tilt

Tilting your head slightly to one side shows that you're giving the interviewer your ear. "Employers are looking for people who are good listeners," says Bowden. This slight gesture can go a long way toward creating a positive impression.

Making eye contact

Making the appropriate amount of eye contact can make you appear more likeable and show you're engaged in the discussion. Looking down at your shoes or focusing on the table in front of you can convey a lack of confidence and even make you appear disinterested. Then again, if your eyes are darting around the room, it can send the message that you're unsure of yourself and are trying to conjure up an answer on the spot. Blinking rapidly can indicate stress and a desire to avoid the truth, making you appear dishonest.

If you have trouble making eye contact due to personal or cultural reasons, Bowden offers a tip. "People who put their hands at belly height get better eye contact. If you put your hands by your side, looking away increases and looking at the floor increases because [your stress levels have increased]," he says.

Further, if you have a tendency to look away or glance upward when trying to recall information, practise talking about your work experience or an interesting story that highlights your skills before the interview, so the details are fresh in your mind and you don't have to search your brain for the information, which causes your eyes to lose focus. ✨

Start Training for Your New Career



BUSINESS

- Honours Business Administration
- Business Administration
- Accounting & Payroll Administrator
- Office Administrator
- Administrative Assistant
- Advanced Business Office Applications

TECHNOLOGY

- Information Technology Professional
- Information Technology Administrator
- Computer & Network Support Administrator
- Network Administrator
- PC Support Technician
- Network Support Technician
- Enterprise Web & Mobile Developer
- Applications Developer
- Web Applications Specialist
- Web Technology Specialist
- Video Game Design & Development
- Video Game Design Technologies

LAW

- Paralegal
- Law Clerk
- Police Foundations
- Law & Security Officer

SUPPLY CHAIN

- Supply Chain & Logistics
- Professional Transport Operator
- Tractor-Trailer (AZ)

HEALTHCARE

- Pharmacy Assistant
- Personal Support Worker
- Personal Support Worker Bridging
- Community Services Worker
- Medical Office Assistant
- Addiction Worker
- Physiotherapy Assistant / Occupational Therapy Assistant
- Physiotherapy Assistant
- Medical Transcriptionist



Not all programs are available at all triOS locations.

Discover a Richer, More Rewarding Future

CONTACT US TODAY!

1-888-569-8817

myNextstep.ca

MISSISSAUGA: 55 CITY CENTRE DR. BRAMPTON: 252 QUEEN ST. E. TORONTO: 425 BLOOR ST. E. STE. 200. SCARBOROUGH: 4438 SHEPPARD AVE. E. OSHAWA: 200 JOHN ST. W.

MOKSHI VIRK, Broker

Dir: **416-804-5005**

virkmokshi@gmail.com



BUYING YOUR FIRST HOME IN CANADA

The real estate market is still strong and prices will hold up in near future. The Echo Generation wants to live close to where they work and play. It makes sense that they have turned to condominium apartments as they have moved into home ownership. Many condominium apartments in the GTA are characterized by their proximity to a diversity of employment, transportation and leisure alternatives.



\$254,900

1 Valhalla Inn Rd
Toronto

Are you ready to own property?

1. **One Valhalla** is centrally located in one of Etobicoke's best residential neighbourhoods. Sherway Gardens and Cloverdale Mall are less than five mins away and schools and parks are around the corner. One Valhalla is a spectacular new townhome and condominium community that will soon rise above the site of the old Valhalla Inn in Etobicoke. When complete, One Valhalla will consist of three spectacular glass-clad towers, rising majestically above a three-storey landscaped podium, and sixty-eight contemporary townhomes. These landmark buildings surround a magnificent courtyard designed to be the focal point of the community.
2. **Sage 6** offers the unique advantage of condominium ownership. Located within short walking distance to the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University, Sage 6 complements the lifestyle demanded by today's modern student. The number of post-secondary students in the Waterloo Region is increasing at a steady rate. With the number of student residences failing to support the escalating student population, those seeking residence while in school are exploring alternative accommodation opportunities.

If you looking to invest in Real estate, Please call
Mokshi Virk, Broker, Royal Star Realty Inc
today at 416-804-5005
for different options available to you. Being an experienced Realtor
she can get you the best deal with no obligation.



"Royal People Deserve Royal Services"
Off: 905-793-1111 Fax: 905-793-1455

18 canadianimmigrant.ca February 2014

facebook/canimmigrant @canimmigrant