

## **Negotiation Non-Verbal Messages**

*By Marsha Lindquist*

Some people breeze through **negotiations** while others struggle and stress about it! It's likely those who find it effortless pay more attention to the non-verbal messages and can adjust their behavior and strategy accordingly. Often it's the "unsaid" things that give us the most information.

Armed with these subtleties, any **negotiator** can come out winning. Want to find out how? Read on.

### **Marsha Lindquist's Non-Verbal Negotiation Indicators:**

1. Faces give them away
2. Body posture
3. Sighs, grunts, and groans
4. Eyes are the windows
5. Signs & gestures

#### **Faces Give Them Away**

If you look at facial expressions during **negotiations**, you can find out if they are listening, receptive or bored. If there is plenty of muscle movement, you have an attentive person. Take in the eyebrows, nose and mouth as you talk and as they talk or listen. Look for surprises, confusion, or disagreement in the eyebrows. Find frustration or anger in the flaring of nostrils. Get cues about agreement or differences from the person's mouth expressions.

#### **Body Posture**

How they sit in the chair and walk into the room for **negotiations** will give you clues. Observe the person's posture. A person who sits up and leans forward is enthusiastic and confident. A person who slumps back is showing lack of interest. Do they walk into or out of the room with their head held high or are they slumped?

#### **Sighs, Grunts and Groans**

Listen for sounds the person makes that are without words during **negotiations**. These are the sighs, grunts and groans. Sometimes they are yelps of delight or a quick laugh. They let you know if the person is agreeing with you or not.

## **Eyes Are the Windows**

Maintain eye contact during **negotiations**. Probably the most important element of your body discussion is this single ingredient. The power of looking directly in another person's eyes can sometimes be almost overwhelming. You can also draw conclusions about the other person by observing where their eyes are focused. Are they looking right at you or through you? Do they often defer their eyes to others on their team? It's difficult for a person to look you straight in the eye and not be sincere.

## **Signs & Gestures**

Watch the other person's gestures when you **negotiate**. If they are open and expressive the chances are they are being honest. Look for hand or arm movements that seem nervous or fidgety. Find the cues to others on their team that seem to convey deference or leadership that is not apparent at first.

Successful **negotiators** take their time in observing the non-verbal messages and using them to their advantage. They are able to view potential conflicts through these messages and turn them around constructively when they **negotiate**. These skills can be learned and, once learned, can provide the confidence necessary to initiate a positive **negotiation**. Understanding the power you have in spotting non-verbal messages will sustain you through some of the most different **negotiations**.

## **About the Author**

*Marsha Lindquist, an ECG team mate and a business strategist for over 15 years, draws on her proven "down in the trenches" experience, creativity, and participative manner to provide real solutions to businesses to assist them in building and growing their businesses. She is an energetic presenter and is also the Chief Executive Officer of The Management Link, Inc.*