

# Common body language mistakes in interviews

What speaks more than words in an interview? Body language is the answer.

Have you noticed how you warm to someone who looks you in the eye, and feel threatened when someone leans back and fold their arms?

Job hunting season is now open and some experts say a good chunk of the interviewer's impression of you will come straight from your body language.

Even if it was only 20% body language and the rest based on [your words](#), then great body language that [helps you get noticed](#) could be the boost that you need in the interview.

That's right. Simple things such as sitting upright and uncrossing your arms will make your interviewer more inclined to like you.

This applies just as much for first jobbers as it does for executives, says Richard Wynn, regional director at Michael Page. "Irrespective of what you say in the interview you will be given points for your handshake, your body language and your eye contact," says Wynn.

These subliminal factors really count. Here at SEEK we've collated some of the top body language secrets to tuck under your belt:

1. **Make your handshake count.** First impressions really matter, says Peter Bateson, director IT at Robert Walters. "The impression created in those initial 30 seconds needs to be positive." Await your interviewer standing up so that you're on the same level. Smile because you're happy to be there and look the interviewer in the eye. Then make sure the handshake is firm, not limp or crushing, adds Wynn. Handshakes are the first and the last interaction you have with the interviewer. So make it count.
2. **Keep your body position neutral.** "A lot of looking interested at an interview comes down to the angle of the body," says Bateson. If you lean back you may look arrogant. But if you lean forward you could be seen as aggressive or even invading the interviewer's space. The other thing to avoid is slouching, which can make you look lazy.
3. **Make eye contact.** Looking the interviewer in the eye makes you look more genuine, says Wynn. But don't stare. If there is more than one interviewer then make sure you look at all of them from time to time, adds Bateson.
4. **Unfold your arms.** Crossing your arms is a sign of resistance. Instead try to put your hands on the table, says Wynn, or on your lap if there is no table. That will help you

gesture naturally, which conveys enthusiasm and energy.

5. **Relax.** You'll appear calmer if you don't fidget or clasp your hands. Fidgeting betrays your nerves. Classic mistakes include playing with your hair, says Wynn. Another one is to pick at your fingernails. "Is that the look you want to give?" he adds.
6. **Think about your facial expression.** Smiling from time to time is important. It's also a good idea to beware of frowning or scrunching your face up, says Bateson. "You should avoid these negative facial expressions." As you smile it may be natural to nod. But don't overdo this.

Finally if you think you may not be aware of your body language, whip out your smartphone before you go for the interview and video yourself doing a mock interview.

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