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Guerrilla Sales & Marketing

The Silent Sales Killer – Body Language

LORI TURNER

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Lori Turner

A whopping 60 to 70 percent of what we communicate is shared through body language and not words.

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If you're in a sales role, the ability to interpret and react shrewdly to body language cues from prospects will make or break you. More often than not, the reason a sales call fails is never vocalized. That's why body language is considered a sales call's silent killer.

Being a savvy communicator is as much about using positive body language as it is about being able to read it.

Sitting forward in your chair with open arms and upward palms sets a confident, positive tone. It's also important to smile often and infuse humor where it makes sense. People want to work with people they like, and laughter can quickly build rapport.

In reading a prospect's body language, look for gestures like:

Touching the Face: When a prospect touches his face with his index finger pointing up and another finger covering his mouth (creating an "L" shape), he may be saying he disagrees.

Covering the Mouth: A finger covering the mouth might be a prospect's subconscious attempt to withhold something. If you see this gesture after they've voiced an objection, ask probing questions to understand the real objection.

Arms Folded: Folded arms could mean a prospect is hiding something. It could also mean he doesn't like what he is hearing. Overcome negative body language by giving the person something to hold – such as a brochure. Occupying his hands can help open the prospect up to your message.

Clenched Hands: Two clenched hands supporting one's head can mean your prospect is frustrated or impatient. Clenched hands on a desk are easier to overcome. Regardless, these gestures telegraph "no" before it's vocalized. Try another strategy before that "no" is official.

Hand Supporting the Head: A hand supporting the head could signal boredom. Finger or foot tapping can, too. Inject more energy and interactivity into your pitch.

Stroking of Chin: This means your prospect is assessing what you're sharing with them.

Open Palms: This says your prospect is open to what you have to say, or they've already formed an allegiance with you. Direct eye contact and a tilted head also indicate interest.

Relaxed Brows: Relaxed brows indicate ease in the conversation. A tense brow line may indicate tension or confusion.

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PROPERTY SALES	44	250	2,436
MORTGAGES	78	375	4,374
FORECLOSURE NOTICES	0	132	2,455
BUILDING PERMITS	0	455	6,492
BANKRUPTCIES	70	287	3,332
BUSINESS LICENSES	28	97	1,192
UTILITY CONNECTIONS	88	497	4,598
MARRIAGE LICENSES	14	85	845

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Smiling Eyes: It's hard to fake a natural smile. Smile lines around the eyes mean it is probably genuine.

As a student of body language, don't let a single gesture derail your pitch. Sometimes a tapping foot is just a sign of too much coffee. It's not an exact science, so it's important not to overreact at every movement.

If you see your prospect starting to mirror your gestures, you know you're on the right path. After you've made your pitch, if they lean forward with unclasped hands and smile, it's time to close.

[Lori Turner](#) is managing partner of RedRover Sales & Marketing, www.redrovercompany.com. You can follow RedRover on Facebook and Twitter.

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