

# Body Language Mistakes: Avoid These At All Costs



You can fail to impart your intended message because of poor body language. Most of us don't realize it, but body language is one of the most salient aspects of any presentation.

## 5 MISTAKES YOU MUST AVOID

### 1. Crossing your arms

When feeling anxious, crossed limbs are the human body's innate way of forming a closed, defensive shield. The two reasons for doing so are: 1) To block any incoming danger; and 2) To place yourself behind a barrier, where you can hide.

In either case, you will lose audience engagement. If you want your audience to be receptive to your speech, stand up straight and keep your arms open.

### 2. Avoiding eye contact

Undoubtedly, this is the greatest blunder you can commit onstage. At its most basic, a presentation is a conversation. And if you don't look at your audience, there's an immediate disconnect. Try to maintain eye contact with different members of the audience throughout your presentation. Also, depending on the content of your presentation, try to smile. It makes the audience perceive you as a warm, trustworthy, respectful, and confident person.

### 3. Turning your back to the audience

Nothing creates disengagement like showing your

back to the audience. Just don't do it! Remember, you're not presenting to yourself, the wall, or the screen behind you. The audience is your key focus.

### 2. Fidgeting

Fidgeting is most commonly associated with nervousness, anxiety, and a loss of focus. Even if you're feeling nervous (which is understandable), just fake it till you make it. In other words, as hard as it might be, try to give the impression that you're not nervous from the get-go. Your nerves will calm down by the time you're halfway through your presentation.

So avoid touching your hair, biting your nails, scratching your head, or playing with your notes—anything that distracts the audience from what you're saying. If you find this really hard to achieve, try incorporating hand gestures into your presentation, which will keep them busy and out of harm's way.

### 3. Staying in one place without moving

The stage is all yours, so make use of it. If you're comfortable moving away from the lectern, make an effort to bring yourself closer to the audience. It will help create engagement.

But, be sure not to put your hands in your pockets. Actually, even if that's the only thing you take from this whitepaper, just never put your hands in your pockets during a presentation!