

BODY LANGUAGE FOR LEADERS

Simone Janson (ed.)

Use Rhetoric & Psychology, Improve Gestures & Facial Expressions, Control Non-Verbal Communication & Physical Signals, Learn Appearance Effect & Charisma



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Introduction: Information, Experiences of Success, Inspiration - you'll find all that in this Book

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10 Tips to guide virtual teams: face to face or virtually communicate?

// *By Ghislane Caulat*

In the course of globalization, virtual work has become almost self-evident in everyday work. However, many managers still believe that virtual communication is the second best way to go. But is face-to-face communication really always the best way?

New leadership concepts are necessary

In order to achieve the best possible results in the virtual world of work, managers have to develop leadership concepts and rethink their existing management habits.

The "virtual" leadership of people is a new discipline that differs from traditional leadership strategies. As managers learn to leverage digital opportunities, they become better leaders in all areas.

The top 10 of communication in virtual teams

Managers should therefore consider the following 10 top tips to get the most out of their virtual teams.

1. **Remember: In virtual space, many areas are reinforced:** In virtual meetings, the participants listen more intensely to the executive than is often the case with "face-to-face communication". Weaknesses in the argumentation are perceived much faster by other participants. Leaders must therefore develop a strong sense of self and learn how to control their emotions, react to situations and verbally express themselves.
2. **Listen carefully:** Most executives are trained to pay attention to the body language of their counterpart and to consider visual stimuli. This is not necessary in virtual space. To succeed here, leaders need to listen more closely and develop a "seventh sense" to connect with their employees.
3. **Create a common virtual space:** Each individual participant should be connected electronically to the others. A mix between virtual and other participants, for example placed around a microphone, does not work.
4. **The right working environment is important:** Participants should be alone and undisturbed in a quiet room - not in a large office, an airport lounge or on the train. All participants should wear a headset that covers both ears. Telephone connections are preferable to Internet-based connections because they provide better sound quality and are more common. Participants should log 10 minutes before the start of the meeting so that technical problems can be solved in time.
5. **Consider the different time zones:** Appointments should be planned in such a way that the employees can participate in the virtual meetings at humane times. If this is not always possible, the dates should be adapted to the needs

of the participants. Thus, the same person does not always have to attend the virtual meetings at an unpleasant time, such as the 3 clock.

6. **Plan enough time:** Schedule a time buffer before the meeting that will allow you and the attendees to prepare. At the beginning of the meeting, take the time to get used to it instead of going to the job. End the meeting by allowing the attendees to leave and ask if anyone has something to add before signing out - similar to a virtual handshake.
7. **Plan the course of the meeting:** Think carefully about what the participants should have read and prepared before the meeting. Send the agenda in advance to all participants and ask for their feedback. When you use presentations, they prepare not only content-related slides but also process-specific slides.
8. **Help the participants to focus:** A "concentration exercise" at the beginning of the meeting can allow the participants to begin thinking in terms of the topic they have been dealing with in order to be fully involved.
9. **Learn to deal with silence:** Most people feel uncomfortable when it is quiet and try to break through by repeating the information. Silence does not mean that people are absent. As a rule, they think about the task and think about how to respond. Give them the time to think in peace.
10. **Build relationships and maintain them:** Relationships are the pillars of virtual leadership. Managers should spend a certain amount of time engaging with each and every member of the team. There are good experiences with concepts such as the "virtual coffee corners". These are meetings without an agenda to which people are invited to meet virtually and discuss things they are currently dealing with.