

The Benefits of Using Effective Body Language in Public Speaking

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Abstract: This research examined various methods of body language, gestures, and expressions used during public speeches. Numerous public speakers have used different techniques during their speeches to improve their presentations. Certain objectives of the research explain how body language can enhance public speech. The third objective was to examine how to prepare and implement various uses of body language into a public speech. Lastly, the research sought to identify the advantages of implementing different hand and arm movement methods while using assorted levels of voice ranges. The study was conducted by observing public speeches at expositions, seminars, government official public speeches, award acceptance speeches, and university professor lectures. Multiple prerecorded public speeches were also evaluated with the use of the internet. The primary results are that using different methods of hand gestures, arm movements, facial expressions, a strong voice, and maintaining a good posture significantly benefits public speeches. It was also established that preparing for a public speech by selecting the type of body language that will support your style of presentation will improve the success of your speech. The recommendation is that public speakers maintain a good posture and respect the audience while maintaining eye contact with all members attending the event. Additionally, the speakers should keep their hands and arm moving at all times while occasionally returning their hands to their waistline area and use various facial gestures and expressions to help entice the audience. Lastly, public speakers should use a strong voice during their speeches as it helps audience members focus during the presentation.

Background: Body language is a form of nonverbal communication that uses physical behaviors, instead of words, in order to convey or express information. This behavior uses eye movement, facial expressions, gestures, body posture, arm movement, touch, and the use of space. Body language, also known as nonverbal-communication, is used in humans and animals but this research article will focus on the human interpretation of body language. Interpreting body language can be difficult as cultural differences exist in how various gestures are interpreted. However, with proper preparation and practice, a public speaker can integrate body language into a public speech and deliver a successful presentation.

Materials and Methods: In order to complete this analysis, the researcher observed several public speeches at expositions, seminars, government official speeches, award acceptance speeches, and university lectures. Multiple online videos of public speeches were also viewed as well. The research was completed between March 13, 2022 to August 20, 2022 while the author was physically located in Huizhou, Guangdong, China.

Results: The findings of this research determined that proper preparation for a public speech can improve the successful delivery of a presentation. The implementation of body language and the use of a strong and confident voice can help an audience focus on the delivery of a speech.

Conclusion: The analysis established that public speeches require various body movements, such as hand gestures and arm movements. Facial expressions, voice volume, eye contact and the use of visual aids are also beneficial to the success of public speaking.

Key Word: Public speaking; Speeches; Effective; Body language; Preparation; Express; Delivering; Presentations; Nonverbal-communication; Convey; Articulate.

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I. Introduction

Public Speaking

Public speaking is a vital skill for success in any field. The ability to deliver a clear and concise message while maintaining eye contact and engaging with your audience can make or break a presentation. While the content of your speech is essential, your body language is just as critical in delivering a successful presentation (Yulianti and Sulistyawati, 2021). Nonverbal-communications uses physical cues, such as posture, gesture, and facial expression, to communicate with your audience. When used effectively, body language can assist with establishing a better connection with your audience, conveying your message, and building rapport (Grayson and Naphthine-Hodgkinson, 2020). There are several benefits to using effective body language in

public speaking. First, using body language to your advantage can engage your audience by making eye contact, smiling, and using hand or arm movements. These methods will make an audience interested in what you have to say. During a public speech, using body language can be used to emphasize and clarify your message. For example, if you are speaking about a sensitive topic, using calm and relaxed nonverbal-communication will help express your message more respectfully. Finally, being polite to your audience builds rapport. Using body language to build rapport can create a more personal connection with your audience and make your presentation more relatable (Courtney and Smallwood, 2020).

The Purposes of Public Speaking:

Most people give speeches to inform, persuade, or entertain. Body language is a vital tool that can help you achieve all three of these purposes. When you are informing, your body language can help you appear more confident and authoritative when addressing your audience (Bilgin, 2022). For example, you can use intense eye contact and gestures to emphasize important points. You can also use your posture to convey a sense of authority. While persuading an audience, your body language can also be very effective when communicating with them. For instance, you can use gestures to emphasize your points. You can also use your facial expressions and body language to convey your passion for your subject; such as entertaining an audience. To illustrate one's point, a person can use facial expressions and gestures to add humor to a speech. An individual could also use body language to articulate energy and enthusiasm (Grayson and Naphine-Hodgkinson, 2020).

Various Types of Public Speaking:

As previously mentioned, public speeches are primarily used to inform, persuade, or entertain. Nonverbal-communication is an essential tool that can help you to achieve all three of these purposes.

Informing

Your body language can help you appear more confident and authoritative when informing your audience. For example, you can use strong eye contact and gestures to emphasize important points. You can also use your posture to express a sense of authority.

Persuading

Your body language can also be very effective when you are trying to persuade your audience (Bilgin, 2022). For instance, you can use gestures to emphasize your points. You can also use your facial expressions and body language to convey your passion for your subject.

Entertaining

The use of body language is important when entertaining your audience. An example would be, using facial expressions and gestures to add humor to your speech. By doing so, you can use your body language to articulate your passion and excitement.

The Advantages of Public Speaking:

Public speaking has numerous advantages, and they are not just restricted to professional orators. Anyone who has to communicate with an audience can benefit from employing the correct body language (Courtney and Smallwood, 2020).

Benefits of using effective body language in public speaking:

1. It can help you connect with your audience.

If you desire to engage with your audience, you must use the correct body language. This means making eye contact, using appropriate gestures, and speaking clearly and concisely. When you use the correct nonverbal-communication, you will find that your audience is more likely to have an interest in what you want to say.

2. It can help you to convey your message more effectively.

Your body language significantly affects how effectively you communicate your message. If you use the wrong type of body language, your audience may not understand what you are trying to say. On the other hand, if you use the right body language, you will find that your audience is more likely to understand your message (Uzun, 2020).

3. It can help you to build rapport with your audience.

In order to build rapport with your audience, you must use the correct body language. This means using welcoming gestures, making eye contact, and speaking in a clear and concise way. When you use the appropriate nonverbal-communication, you will find that your audience will become enticed by you.

4. It can help you to project confidence.

A critical aspect of public speaking is confidence. If you want to project confidence, you need to make sure you use effective body language. This requires standing up straight, making eye contact, and speaking in a clear and concise manner. When you use effective body language, you will find that your audience is more likely to believe in what you are saying (Bilgin, 2022).

5. It can help you to control your nerves.

If you feel nervous prior to a public speaking event, you must use the correct body language. This means taking slow and deep breaths, speaking slowly, peacefully moving your arms, and making sure you maintain eye contact with the crowd. When you use the right body language, you will find that your nerves will start to calm down (Vogel and Viale, 2018).

Delivering a Successful Public Speech:

The deliver a successful public speech can be daunting, and many people focus on the words they use to exclude other important elements. However, how you use your body can be just as important as your words. *Effective body language methods that can improve a public speech:*

1. *It can help you connect with your audience.*

Using effective body language to connect with your audience can help you deliver a successful speech. For example, making eye contact, smiling, and using gestures can help you establish a connection with your audience and make them feel more engaged with your speech (Courtney and Smallwood, 2020).

2. It can help you project confidence.

If you want to project confidence when you speak, you need to use effective body language. Maintaining a proper posture by standing up straight, establishing eye contact with eyebrow movements, and speaking clearly are all ways to project confidence. Additionally, avoiding fidgeting and using open body language will make you appear more confident to your audience.

3. It can help you control the room.

Effective body language can help you control the room and engage your audience. For example, if you want to emphasize a point, you can use gestures or move to a different part of the stage. Additionally, you can use body language to keep people's attention focused on you by making eye contact and smiling (Uzun, 2020).

4. It can help you express your message.

The nonverbal-communication you display can be just as important as your words when delivering your message. For example, if you want to appear passionate about your topic, you can use hand gestures and facial expressions to express your enthusiasm. Additionally, you can use a confident posture and powerful speaking voice if you want to appear authoritative.

5. It can help you build rapport.

Building rapport with your audience is essential for delivering a successful speech (Kryknitska, 2020). You can build rapport by using effective body language, such as making eye contact, smiling, and using open body language. Additionally, you can use visual aid props or invite members from the audience on stage to assist you. Once an invited guest accompanies you on stage, you can deliver a light touch on the arm or shoulder to build rapport.

Evaluation of Public Speeches:

The research on the effects of using effective body language in public speaking is inconclusive. Some studies suggest that it can be helpful, while others find no significant impact. For example, one study found that when speakers used more expansive, open body language, they were rated as more credible, competent, and appealing than when they used more constricted, closed body language (Uzun, 2020). However, another study found that while certain types of nonverbal-communication (e.g., smiling) can increase perceptions of warmth, it does not necessarily increase competence. Nevertheless, the research suggests that while effective body language may not guarantee a successful public speech, it can help. In particular, speakers who use open, relaxed body language are more likely to be credible and pleasant. In contrast, those who use closed, constricted body language may come across as cold and untrustworthy.

How to assist with delivering an effective public speech:

When giving a public speech, it is important to be aware of your body language. Your posture, facial expressions, and hand gestures influence your audience's perception of your message. Good body language can make you appear more confident and credible. It can assist with establishing a better connection with your audience and deliver your message more effectively.

1. Important points to use effective body language in public speaking include:

- a) Stand up straight and maintain good posture.
- b) Make eye contact with your audience.
- c) Use facial expressions to convey your emotions.
- d) Use gestures to emphasize your points.

- e) Avoid fidgeting or pacing back and forth.

Audiences

Being respectful and gaining the audience's trust should always be the main focus of a public speaker (Konin and Denegar, 2019). The audience made it a point to be present for your speech and may have taken time out of their busy schedule to watch your presentation. One of the first things you must control in front of your audience is your nerves. When you are nervous, your body language can be all over the place. By focusing on your body language and using it effectively, you can control your audience and ensure they pay attention to you.

1. Building a rapport with the audience

Your body language can help you build rapport with your audience. If you make eye contact, smile, and use open body language, your audience will likely trust and connect with you. Increasing confidence with effective body language can also help improve your confidence. By standing up straight, making eye contact, and using hand gestures, you will appear more confident and in control, making your audience more likely to listen (Yulianti and Sulistyawati, 2021).

Greetings and Openers

When you step onto the stage, make sure to give the audience a warm welcome with a smile and open body language (Konin and Denegar, 2019). This will help ease the audience and let them know that you are excited to be there. Thank the entire crowd for taking time out of their busy schedule to attend your presentation. Inform the members of the audience what the topic of your speech is. Last, respectfully request that everyone holds their questions until the end of your speech. The reason for this is, in most cases, there is a time limit for a speech. If you answer questions throughout a speech, this will extend your presentation time significantly.

Establishing Eye Contact

Throughout your speech, it is essential to maintain eye contact with your audience. This will help to keep them engaged and show that you are speaking to them directly.

Using Gestures

Gestures can help to emphasize specific points in your speech and add interest. However, it is important to use them moderately so as not to distract from your message.

Projecting Your Voice

Make sure to speak loud enough so that everyone in the audience can hear you. This will help to keep everyone engaged and prevent the crowd from becoming bored. If the venue is too large for simply using your voice, use a microphone (Rao, 2017). Be sure to test the microphone prior to the event to ensure all sound settings are balanced.

Keep Your Body Moving

If the room you are speaking in is large, try to move around so that everyone can see you. Doing so will help with keeping the audience engaged and it will prevent everyone from becoming restless.

Using Effective Verbal and Nonverbal Language:

Effective verbal and nonverbal-communication is critical when delivering a speech. How we say things are just as important as the words we use (Rao, 2017). Our tone, facial expressions, and body language all convey our message and engage our audience.

Benefits of using effective verbal communication during a public speech:

1. It can help to keep your audience's attention.
2. It can help to make your points more transparent.
3. It can add interest and variation to your presentation.
4. It can help to build rapport with your audience.

Benefits of using effective nonverbal communication during a public speech:

1. It can help to reinforce your message.
2. It can help to engage your audience.
3. It can help to build rapport with your audience.
4. It can help to project confidence.

Speech conclusions and closers

As you close in on the end of your speech, notify the audience that you are thankful that everyone adjusted their schedule to attend your presentation (Konin and Denegar, 2019). Also, inform everyone that you hope you were able to provide some valuable insights throughout your speech. Afterwards, quickly review everything you discussed during your presentation. Last, let everyone know it is time for a question and answer session.

Types of Presentations:

Informative Presentations

Delivering an informative presentation is a valuable skill for many people, whether you are a student, an employee, or a business owner. Giving an informative presentation means being able to provide information to an audience interestingly and engagingly (Kryknitska, 2020).

Steps to follow to ensure that your informative presentation is successful:

1. Choose a topic that you are knowledgeable about and that you think will be interesting to your audience.
2. Do your research and ensure you have a solid understanding of the subject matter.
3. Plan and structure your presentation in a way that will be easy for your audience to follow.
4. Use visual aids to help illustrate your points and make your presentation more engaging.
5. Practice your presentation several times before delivering it to your audience.

Following these tips can enhance an informative presentation that will engage and enlighten your audience.

Persuasive Presentations

When delivering a persuasive presentation, it is important to be aware of your audience and to tailor your message accordingly (Kryknitska, 2020). It is also vital to be mindful of your body language and use it to your advantage.

Suggestions for delivering a persuasive presentation include:

1. Make eye contact with your audience. This will help create a connection with them and make them more likely to pay attention to you.
2. Use strong body language. Stand up straight, use hand gestures to emphasize your points, and make sure your facial expressions match the tone of your voice.
3. Use clear and concise language. Refrain using technical terms that your audience may not understand (Konin and Denegar, 2019).
4. Be passionate about your topic. If you are enthusiastic about what you are saying, your audience will be more likely to be persuaded by your argument.
5. Be prepared! Practice your presentation. You wrote it, and you should know it.
6. Anticipate answers to questions that your audience may ask. You can also ask another person, such as a family member or friend, to assist you by listening to your speech, making suggestions, and asking questions. This will show that you are confident in your argument and will make it more likely that your audience will agree with you.

Body Language:

While speaking in front of an audience, it is important to be aware of your body language. Your posture, hand gestures, facial expressions, and arm movements influence your audience's perception of you and your message. Mind your posture by standing up straight and avoid slouching. This will make you appear more confident and credible. Make eye contact with the crowd to connect with them and keep their attention focused on you. Use hand gestures to emphasize your points. Avoid fidgeting or making nervous movements, as this can distract your message (Vogel and Viale, 2018). Smile and maintain a positive facial expression to make you appear more approachable and likable. Finally, keep your arms moving while you are speaking while occasionally returning them to your hip line area.

The Advantages of Using Body Language:

Advantages of using body language during a public speech include:

1. It can help to engage your audience and make your speech more interesting.
2. It can help to emphasize specific points and make your argument more persuasive.
3. It can help to make your presentation more dynamic and lively.
4. It can help to add nonverbal cues that can add meaning to your words.
5. It can help to make you appear more confident and in control of your material.

Different Types of Body Language

Body language is recognized as a type of nonverbal-communication that physical behaviors, such as facial expressions, hand gestures, and postures, convey messages (Oldham, 2020). It can also include eye contact, touch, and space.

There are various types of body language, and each can send a distinct message. For example, the use of eye contact can show interest, while a lack of eye contact can indicate disinterest or anxiety. Smiling, on the other hand, generally indicates happiness or pleasure, while a frown may show displeasure or sadness.

Body language is often used to communicate emotions, but it can also convey information about attitudes, beliefs, and intentions. It can be conscious or unconscious, and combined with other nonverbal cues, such as vocal cues and facial expressions.

When interpreting someone's body language, it is important to consider the context of the situation and the relationship between the people involved. For example, a hug between friends will likely be interpreted differently than a hug between a romantic couple. Additionally, body language can vary depending on culture, so it is essential to be aware of any cultural differences when trying to interpret it (Konin and Denegar, 2019).

When to Use Body Language

Body language is important in public speaking, but it should be used judiciously. Too much body language can be distracting, and you must be aware of the nonverbal cues you send to your audience.

There are certain times when body language can be effective in supporting your message. For instance, if you are speaking about an emotional topic, facial expressions and gestures can help express your feelings and connect with your audience. Additionally, if you are making a point that you want your audience to remember, using hand gestures or visual aid props can help to reinforce your message.

Ultimately, the best way to use body language in public speaking is to be aware of how to use nonverbal cues and use them in a natural and authentic way.

Is Body Language Necessary?

Body language is beneficial when giving a speech. It can help articulate your message more effectively and connect with your audience. Its use keeps the crowd focused throughout the presentation and supports the delivery of the speech by making it more interesting (Konin and Denegar, 2019).

Preparing to Use Body Language in a Public Speech:

When preparing for a public speaking event, it is important to focus on using your body language to convey confidence and control.

Different techniques to help you prepare for a presentation:

1. Stand up straight and tall. This will help you project confidence and authority.
2. Make eye contact with your audience. This will help build rapport and connection.
3. Never stare at one member in the audience for more than a few seconds. This may cause that individual to become uncomfortable, and this will cause a ripple effect by making other people feel uncomfortable as well.
4. Use various hand gestures to emphasize your points. This will help keep your audience engaged.
5. Smile. This will help ease your audience and make everyone more receptive to your message.

Using Body Language during a Public Speech:

Delivering a public speech can be a daunting task, but using body language can help you display confidence and engage your audience (Konin and Denegar, 2019). It's important to relax and remember that you are in control of the event. Maintain eye contact with your audience to help you connect with them and hold their attention.

Remember to use the hand gestures you practiced with during your presentation to emphasize your points. However, avoid gesturing too much, as this can be distracting towards your audience.

Keep your arms moving throughout your speech, and remember to return them to your waistline area occasionally. Use your facial expressions to express your emotions, and always show a genuine smile during the moments you are not speaking.

II. Recommendations

After attending several public speaking events and closely observing the speakers, I feel that the following recommendations could benefit other speakers by improving their speeches. First, maintain a good posture by standing up straight with your shoulders back. Maintaining a good posture not only allows more airflow into your lungs, but it makes you appear more professional in front of your audience. Next, maintain eye contact at all times. Not just towards the audience members in the front row or at random individuals. You should use your eye and pan over all of the members periodically. The audience is there to watch you speak, so you should show respect and take notice of everyone. Public speakers should use hand gestures and arm movements to emphasize their points. Keep your hands and arms moving throughout your presentation. These movements help keep your audience focused and make you seem more interesting. Another important point is, to use a strong voice. You are presenting yourself as a professional and you are the person in control during the event. Use the power of your voice to deliver your speech, and remember to make sure that the entire venue

needs to hear you. If your voice is not loud enough, use the assistance of a microphone and make sure the sound levels are thoroughly tested before the event begins. Last, avoid fidgeting. Doing so will cause the audience members to think that you are nervous. Relax, take a deep breath and remember to keep your hands and arms moving because this will reduce your risk of fidgeting.

III. Conclusion

In summary, the information collected during this research will allow me to continue evaluating the different methods required to deliver compelling public speeches. This research encouraged me to observe numerous public speaking events to develop different techniques necessary to provide a successful presentation. The analysis established that different public speeches require various body movements, such as hand gestures and arm movements. The research also concluded that facial expressions, voice volume, eye contact, and visual aids also benefit the success of a public speech.

My objective is to become a distinguished public speaker and an individual that can be selected for observation for others to improve their public speaking techniques. Completing this research allowed me to acquire helpful knowledge concerning presentation preparations, building rapport, and different methods required to deliver a successful public speech. The delivery of effective presentations using informative, persuasive, and entertainment purposes is what I plan on providing to my future audience members.

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