

Focus on **body language**

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'Universal' vs cultural gestures

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Universal gestures

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About **Universal** gestures:
a record of our evolution

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Many universal gestures are a shared by all human beings

- Example:
 - **Smiling** as a sign of happiness or pleasure



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Many universal gestures are a record of our evolution

Examples:

- **Head-shaking to say no:** used by the baby to signal that s/he has had enough food
- **Upward palms:** used to show that nothing (no arms) are being concealed

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Many universal gestures are a record of evolution

Examples:

- **Head-bobbing** is used by the baboon to indicate that it has had enough food
- **Upward arm** is used to show that nothing (weapons) are being concealed

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Hands and communication

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The power in your hands....

- The hands have been the most important tools in human evolution
- There are more connections between the brain and the hands than between any other body part
- Hands are one of the most important means by which we communicate non-verbally

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Visible vs non visible hands

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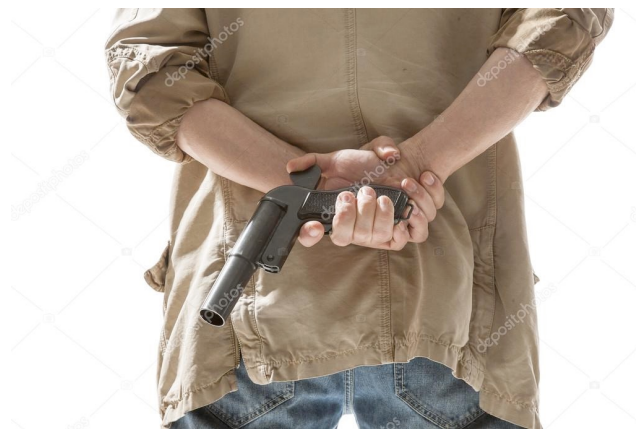
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A survival mechanism

- If you don't see your opponent's hands they may be hiding something...

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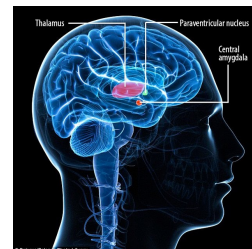
When you don't see the hands of the person you're talking to

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Your brain sends signals

- The amygdala is responsible for detecting and responding to threats

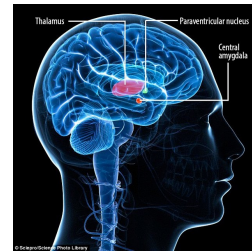


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So....

- When we cannot see somebody's hands our brain worries that we cannot trust them fully



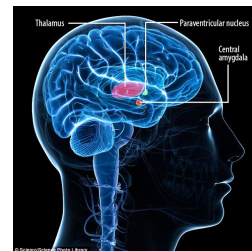
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So

- When we cannot see somebody's hands our brain worries that we cannot trust them fully

Make your hands visible and use your gestures when you are speaking



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Your hands provide trust

- When you meet someone
- When you talk
- When you give a speech
- For defence/show harmlessness

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Showing your hands can make you
appear more charismatic

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What gestures?

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Explanatory gestures

Help us

- define
- highlight
- organize

our words

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But also...

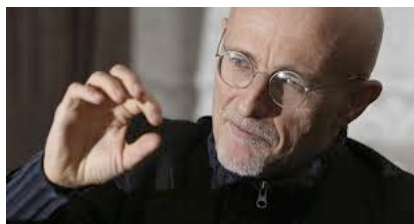
They help us:

Provide guidance to:

- our emotions
- the kind of person we are

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Palms and fingers

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Open palms:

a sign of truth, peace, non threat, honesty



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Open palms = non threat

- I have nothing to hide
- I am coming unarmed, in peace
- You can trust me



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Open palms = enhance communication

- If a person is being **open** they'll expose their palms

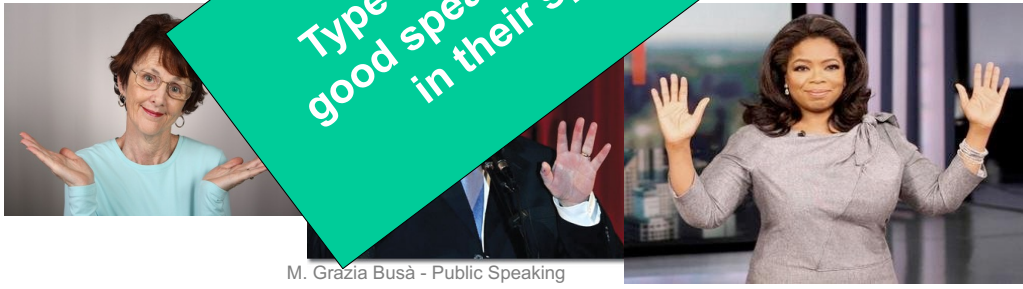


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Open palms = enhance communication

- If a person is being open, they expose their palms

Type of gesture that good speakers use a lot in their speech



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I'M BEING OPEN



Why it works: Authors **Barbara and Allan Pease** explain that open palms are associated with **truth and honesty**, showing your audience you have nothing to hide.

Use it: When you want to be **fully transparent**. By putting it all out there, you welcome people in.

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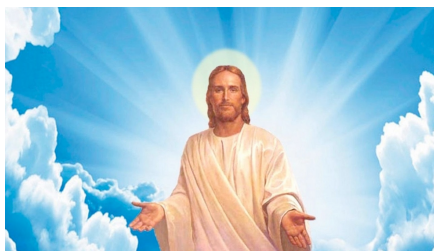
<https://www.theladders.com/career-advice/7-hand-gestures-guaranteed-to-get-people-to-listen-to-you>

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Openness favors trust

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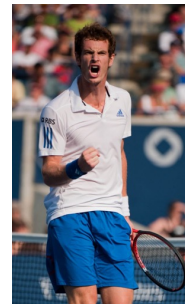
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Closed palms

- Associated with **deceit, dishonesty, dominance, power, authority, tension**
- Does not enhance communication



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No clenched fists

- It looks like one wants to fight or has pent-up anger



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Palms down = authority

Palms turned downwards project
immediate **authority, certainty**
Do not enhance communication



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I'M CERTAIN



Why it works: Anthropologist **David Givens** found that this gesture conveys **assertiveness**, both in humans and throughout the animal kingdom.

Use it: When you know what you're talking about and have a strong **directive** to give.

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Palm-Closed-Finger-Pointed = 'Do it or else!'

- the pointed finger is used like a symbolic club with which the speaker figuratively beats his listeners into submission



- it is **one of the most annoying gestures** anyone can use while speaking



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compare

How About a Nice Hand?



Palm Up:

Submission



Palm Down:

Authority and dominance



Pointing:

Beating into submission

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Use of palms in speech

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZZ7k8cMA-4>
- (4.35 -13.50)

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2. The finger pointed upwards = attention and precision



authoritative, non-aggressive

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An alternative to the Pointed Finger : Precision Grip



- thoughtful
- goal-oriented
- focused

Conveys
authoritativeness,
not aggressiveness



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Tension in the hands indicates speaker's tension



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Hands Clenched together

- indicates a restrained, anxious or negative attitude



http://westsidetoastmasters.com/resources/book_of_body_language/chap7.html



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The steeple


- indicates a confident or self-assured attitude.
- sometimes can be read as arrogance



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I'M CONFIDENT IN MYSELF

Why it works: Steepling is a strong display of **power** and reflects **higher-order thought processes** like problem-solving.

Use it: When you want to show or share your wisdom on a certain subject matter.

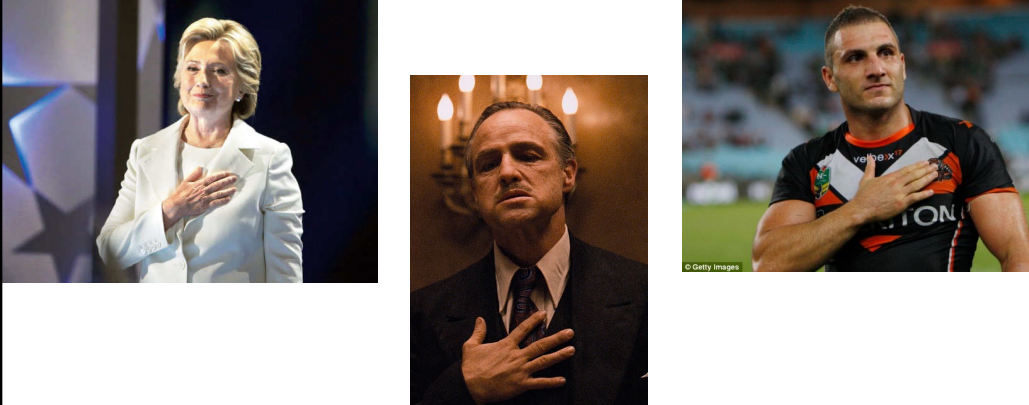
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'My heart' gesture

- indicates honesty and something that the speaker truly cares about



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[I MEAN IT] FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART

Why it works: Researchers **Parzuchowski and Wojciszke** found that this gesture increases others' perception of **honesty** and the honesty shown in one's own behavior.



Use it: When you truly believe in what you're saying and want to convey that to others.

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Finger counting

- A really nice way to help your listener follow what you are saying

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FINGER COUNTING

Why it works: The movement makes your points easier for listeners to remember and serves as a **nonverbal anchor** for your list.

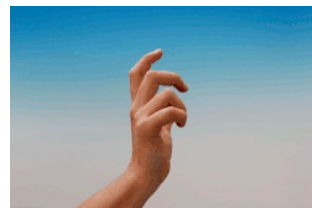
Use it: To help people follow along when you have several **key items** to highlight.

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3. Representational gestures

- used to illustrate what the person is talking about
- help the listener understand better



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4. Metaphorical gestures

used to trace a thought or indicate a path in space



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Other common gestures

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Beats: beating tempo

- 'beat' the rhythm of speech
- used to emphasize words in a sentence or syllables in a word



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THIS IS THE WAY IT IS

Why it works: The gesture embodies the abstract idea of rigid, **unwavering precision**, physically grounding the message for the audience.

Use it: When you want to make a precise point or show your **strong stance** on a topic.

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Deictics (pointing gestures)
used to point a place, object, person, etc.



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Adaptors

- ◆ Coping gestures (give us confort)
- ◆ help us adapt to situations
 - ◆ Self adaptos (touching onself)
 - ◆ Alter adaptors (touching others)
 - ◆ Object adaptors (touching objects)



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Task

- ◆ Tell a fairy tale and use gesture to describe objects and actions in the tale

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