

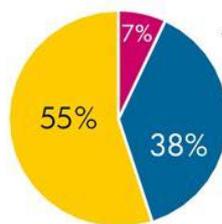
Body Language

Professor Amy Cuddy is a leading body language expert whose research has explored the influence of posture poses and how people view us and how we view ourselves. The interest in this topic resulted from an accident that left Cuddy feeling helpless lowering her confidence levels. The impact this had on her behaviour, particularly her body language became a key topic in her research as she searched for ways to regain her confidence.

Cuddy chose to research powerful leaders as these were people who embodied confidence. The research aimed to identify what made these people feel and appear confident. The results showed that men and women tended to have more testosterone (a male sex hormone that plays a part in risk taking and confidence) and less cortisol (the stress hormone). An interesting finding was that this hormone profile altered from person to person and from hour to hour. It was discovered that how people behave effects the levels of testosterone and cortisol and Cuddy promotes body language that helps others to feels more confident. This in turn raises self-esteem. Although her research is viewed as controversial by some, here are strategies that are widely accepted to impact self-esteem

Slowing body movements and breathing

There is a mind-body connection that means how we behave influences how we feel or think e.g. fidgeting and shallow breathing is a nervous response which can lead to further cortisol being released. Slowing the body movements down has a calming influence and reduces the levels of cortisol.



Dr. Albert Mehrabian's 7-38-55% Rule

Elements of Personal Communication

- 7% spoken words
- 38% voice, tone
- 55% body language

The effects of standing or sitting straight Anxiety and low self-esteem can lead to protective body language. Postures such as slouching, folding arms and shrinking into chairs or standing in the corner can keep self-esteem low. Taking up space, standing tall can increase testosterone levels leading to increased confidence.