

## *Sales 100: Skillful Hands*

In the last study we focused on the importance of “integrity of heart” as a professional salesman. The heart of a Christian salesman does not merely look out his own legitimate interests, but also looks out for the interests of others with the same attitude that Christ has towards us. He sees a person, not a prospect – an opportunity to serve, not an opportunity to profit.

But is integrity of heart enough? If you needed life-saving surgery, which would you prefer – a skillful pagan with an evil eye for profit or an incompetent Christian with integrity of heart for service?

Do you think the Lord accepts this either/or dilemma? Absolutely not! I believe the Lord wants His servants to have skillful hands that are controlled by hearts of integrity. I believe He wants His representatives to be the best in their respective fields. I believe He wants His people to be the most skilled at whatever He has called them to do for Him. I believe He sees the quality of our workmanship as a reflection on Him.

Effective salesmanship requires skillful hands. There is a body of knowledge about selling that can and should be studied and mastered by the Christian sales professional. There is an interesting unity of thought on the subject. There is nothing unbiblical about these principles, nor is there anything uniquely Christian about them either. The key is to master the skills and apply them with integrity of heart.

### Psalm 78:72

72 So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, And guided them with his skillful hands.

### Proverbs 22:29

29 Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men.

### Exodus 35:30-35, 36:2

30 Then Moses said to the sons of Israel, "See the Lord has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah,

31 and He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding and in knowledge and in all craftsmanship;

32 to make designs for working in gold and in silver and in bronze ...

34 He has also put in his heart to teach ...

35 He has filled them with skill to perform every work of an engraver and of a designer ...

36:2 Then Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every skillful person in whom the Lord put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him, to come to

### OBSERVE/DISCUSS

We've studied the first part of Psalm 78:72 – integrity of the heart – now let's study its counterpart.

*Leader: Read Psalm 78:72 again, Proverbs 22:29, Exodus 35:30-35, 36:2 and mark and say aloud **skillful, skilled, skill and craftsmanship.***

This word translated **skilled** means extraordinary expertise in an area. What did you discover about God's expectation for the men in His service, and God's role in fulfilling it?

Does this surprise anyone that the Lord wants us to be extraordinarily skilled in whatever He has called us to do?

We understand that 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (ask someone to read from their Bible) asserts that the Bible has all the truth that the man of God needs to accomplish his work for God. But we also acknowledge that the Bible is not asserting that it contains all the facts or instruction that the man of God needs to accomplish his work for God. The "craftsmanship," the "skills" required for your line of work will no doubt require additional education, training, instruction, and practice. The Christian businessman does not ignore or avoid secular training (read Proverbs 14:33), but he does evaluate it and apply it in accordance with biblical principles.

The definition of wisdom is skillful living in accordance with Biblical truth. Wise Christian businessmen should seek to become exceptionally skilled in their profession, but they must discipline themselves to apply these skills in accordance with God's Word. In a sense, the skills are amoral – neither moral nor immoral. It is the application that determines the morality. For example, the skills that the Lord gave the craftsmen to work with gold for the building of the tabernacle were the same skills used to make the golden calf idol. The goldsmith skills themselves were amoral.

The same thing is true of selling skills. The skills themselves are amoral; it is the application that determines their morality.

the work to perform it.

**Psalm 19:14**

14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer.

**Proverbs**

18:4 The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; the fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook.

20:5 A plan in the heart of a man is like deep water, but a man of understanding draws it out.

18:13 He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him.

18:15 The mind of the prudent acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.

Turn to Appendix at the back of the study.

*Leader: Explain, compare and contrast the sales process outlined by these three different sales professionals.*

Do you note any similarities? Is there a unity of thought? List the skills required to be successful with these methods.

Let's explore two areas from a biblical point of view.

**Communication Skills**

Many of the skills required are communication skills, the ability to exchange understanding, not just words. Let's dig around a bit in the Bible and see what we find about communication.

*Leader: Read the verses in the left panel (blue color) starting with Psalm 19:14 through Proverbs 18:15.*

Apply these timeless truths from God's Word to the important **analysis/investigating step** of the professional sales process. List the key principles and how they apply.

Principle	Application

**Proverbs**

10:19 When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, but he who restrains his lips is wise.

17:27-28 He who restrains his words has knowledge, And he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.

28 Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; When he closes his lips, he is [counted] prudent.

15:28 The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, But the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.

18:7 A fool's mouth is his ruin, And his lips are the snare of his soul.

**Ecclesiastes**

3:7b a time to be silent, and a time to speak.

**Proverbs 16:24**

24 Pleasant words are a

*Leader: Read listed verses from Proverbs 10:19 to Ecclesiastes 3:7 (red color).*

Apply these timeless truths from God's Word to sales communication. List the key principles and how they apply.

Principle	Application

*Leader: Read listed verses beginning with Proverbs 16:24 through Galatians 5:22-23 (green color).*

What is the thrust of these timeless truths from God's Word? List the key principles and how they apply to sales communication.

Principle	Application

honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

**Ephesians 4:29**

29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment.

**1 Thessalonians 5:14-18**

14 And we urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all men.

15 See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all men.

16 Rejoice always;

17 pray without ceasing;

18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus

**Galatians 5:22-23**

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

**Proverbs**

*Leader: Read listed verses beginning with Proverbs 4:24 through 26:28 (maroon color).*

What is the thrust of these timeless truths from God's Word? List the key principles and how they apply to sales communication.

Principle	Application

*Leader: Read listed verses beginning with Proverbs 15:1 through 26:4-5 (orange color).*

Based on these verses, how should we handle an emotional or angry prospect or client?

But (note the contrast)	

You may have heard the phrase "The eyes are the window to the soul" and thought it was in the Bible. This phrase is not in the Bible, but the Bible does teach a few things about the eyes and communication.

4:24 Put away from you a deceitful mouth, And put devious lips far from you.

12:19 Truthful lips will be established forever, But a lying tongue is only for a moment.

20 Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, But counselors of peace have joy.

21 No harm befalls the righteous, But the wicked are filled with trouble.

22 Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, But those who deal faithfully are His delight.

21:6 The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a fleeting vapor, the pursuit of death.

26:28 A lying tongue hates those it crushes, And a flattering mouth works ruin.

### Proverbs

15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

15:4 A soothing tongue is a tree of life, But perversion in it crushes the spirit.

29:11 A fool always loses his temper, But a wise man holds it back.

*Leader: Read the listed verses from Proverbs 21:4 through 15:30. (black color)*

What is being taught in these verses regarding the eyes? What do your prospects see when they look into your eyes?

There has been a lot written about **body language** (non-verbal communication). One example that I found in my research is included in the appendix.

How should we evaluate this instruction?

Let's recap what we have learned from the Bible about communication and apply it to salesmanship. We've learned:

- It takes patience, understanding, discernment, preparation, good questions and active listening to discover knowledge of your prospects needs.
- It is always best to talk less and listen more.
- It is important to choose the words we use carefully.
- God insists on making all the truth known – no quibbling, no half truths, and no deception of any kind.
- Respond to anger and harsh words with restraint and gentle, soothing words.

26:4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Lest you also be like him.

5 Answer a fool as his folly [deserves], Lest he be wise in his own eyes.

### Proverbs

21:4 Haughty eyes and a proud heart, The lamp of the wicked, is sin.

6:12 A worthless person, a wicked man, is the one who walks with a false mouth,

6:13 Who winks with his eyes, who signals with his feet, Who points with his fingers;

6:14 Who [with] perversity in his heart devises evil continually, Who spreads strife.

6:15 Therefore his calamity will come suddenly; Instantly he will be broken, and there will be no healing

10:10 He who winks the eye causes trouble, And a babbling fool will be thrown down.

16:30 He who winks his eyes [does so] to devise perverse things; He who compresses his lips brings evil to pass.

30:13 There is a kind-- oh how lofty are his eyes! And his eyelids are raised [in arrogance.]

30:14 There is a kind of [man]

- The eyes are a window to our souls, and our body language betrays our hearts more than we probably realize.

All three of the sales models emphasized **needs analysis** as the most critical step in the process, and we have just discovered many biblically-based principles regarding how to do this effectively. But all of these methods and skills, even if they are biblically-based, must be rightly motivated.

For whom is the Christian sales person primarily concerned? Why?

The sales person with an evil eye analyzes the customer like a military officer reconns an enemy position. He looks for points of vulnerability to exploit. He is more concerned with making his product/service **fit** the customer's needs than he is in discovering if his product/service does actually fit the customer's needs. He does this in two ways. (1) Force the customer's needs and wants to fit his product/service, or (2) Force his product/service to meet the customer's needs and wants.

Think about this for a moment and share examples that you have witnessed in your marketplace.

In contrast, the Christian sales person is actually trying to discover if their product/service is a legitimate fit for the needs and wants discovered. The Christian sales person does not try to create needs, and he does not misrepresent what his product/service can do. The Christian sales person is willing to walk away, even refer to someone else, the prospect whom they cannot serve properly.

Think about this for a moment and share examples that you have witnessed in your marketplace.

Now we're ready to focus on the second area emphasized in the salesmanship training.

whose teeth are [like] swords, And his jaw teeth [like] knives, To devour the afflicted from the earth, And the needy from among men.

6:25 Do not desire her beauty in your heart, Nor let her catch you with her eyelids.

15:30 O Bright eyes gladden the heart; Good news puts fat on the bones.

### Proverbs 20:23

23 Differing weights are an abomination to the Lord, And a false scale is not good.

### Proverbs 11:1

1 A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, But a just weight is His delight.

## Closing Skills

The approach I'd like to take here is to evaluate some of the classic closing techniques from a biblical perspective.

## Price negotiation

It is a common practice to discount the price or offer an incentive of some kind to close a difficult deal. Is this biblical?

*Leader: Read Proverbs 20:23 and 11:1.*

In biblical times, merchants used scales in the marketplace to conduct their business. Since there was no common currency, they would weigh out the silver and gold to determine what had been paid, and in some cases weigh out what had been purchased. On one side of the scale they would place the standard measurement weights, and on the other side they would place the silver or gold being used for payment or the product being purchased if sold by weight.

Apparently, it was a common business practice for merchants to have multiple sets of weights. One set would be the true weights, another would be heavier, and yet another would be lighter. The heavier weights were used to make the customer weigh out more silver or gold, to pay more for the same product. The lighter weights were used to weigh out less product, to give the customer less for the same price.

God's Word is quite emphatic on this principle. (For a thorough study of this important principle, refer to the Business Inductive Study entitled Equal Weights and Measures.) It is mentioned ten times and the thrust is always the same – it is an abomination to the Lord for us to take advantage of a buyer and allow him to pay more or receive less than any other buyer meeting the same criteria. This principle allows a pricing schedule that gives discounts for volume, special pricing for advertised sales, and even open negotiation as long as everyone understands the rules.

How do you think this principle applies to the common practice of begrudgingly or cleverly giving discounts or extra benefits to close the sale, while happily letting another customer pay more or get less because they didn't demand it?



## Bribery

This seems like a no-brainer. Of course it is not right to bribe someone in order to make a sale, right?

*Leader: Read Proverbs 17:8, 23, Exodus 23:8, Isaiah 1:23, Deuteronomy 10:17 and say aloud and mark **bribe**.*

What are the start truths about bribery?

### Proverbs 17:8, 23

8 A bribe is a charm in the sight of its owner; Wherever he turns, he prospers.

23 A wicked man receives a bribe from the bosom to pervert the ways of justice.

### Exodus 23:8

8 "And you shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of the just.

### Isaiah 1:23

23 Your rulers are rebels, And companions of thieves; Everyone loves a bribe, And chases after rewards. They do not defend the orphan, Nor does the widow's plea come before them.

### Deuteronomy 10:17

17 "For the Lord your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords,

What is the purpose of bribery according to these passages? How might this apply to business to business selling?

It is probably obvious to most of us that illegal under-the-table kickbacks and such to get contracts is something that God most likely frowns upon. But what if that is the way business is done in another country?

What about things like tickets to the ballgame, Christmas presents, expensive dinners, corporate giveaways, business referrals? What principle or principles from God's Word can we use to govern our business practices in this area?

the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality, nor take a bribe.

#### Proverbs 20:25

25 It is a snare for a man to say rashly, "It is holy!" And after the vows to make inquiry.

#### Proverbs 21:5

5 The plans of the diligent [lead] surely to advantage, but everyone who is hasty [comes] surely to poverty.

### High Pressure

We've all experienced this haven't we? The deal is only good today ... don't wait there is a limited supply ... tell me what it will take for you to sign today ... I'm not leaving until you sign ... . Many sales techniques depend upon getting the customer to make a rash decision. Sales people are trained to cleverly overcome objections and close the deal. Many sales situations are designed for an impulse sale. The underlying premise is that if a customer had all the information, if they really had time to think about, they might not make the purchase. Is this a biblical approach?

*Leader: Read Proverbs 20:25 and 21:5 from left panel, also have members read aloud from their bibles Proverbs 29:20, 19:2, 28:20, 18:13, 15:28 and 20:5.*

What is the theme from God's Word on this issue of hasty decision-making?

Since God's Word warns people not to be hasty, should the Christian sales person try to make people make hasty or impulsive decisions? Is there ever a time a Christian sales person should push for a sale like this?

### Always Ask For The Order

What about this time-honored maxim?

*Leader: Read James 4:2.*

This seems plain enough – one reason you may not get a sale is because you did not actually ask for it.

However, is this verse teaching this in context? Open your Bibles to

James 4 and read 4:1-4. What is the context of this statement?

James 4:2

2b You do not have because you do not ask.

Remember, there is no personal interpretation of God's Word. What is God's point in this context?

As tempting as it may be, **never pull a verse out of context to prove a point.** I personally believe that it is perfectly acceptable and kind of stupid if we don't *always ask for the order.* And in some cases when we are convinced it is really in our customer's best interests, I believe it might be acceptable to even push a bit to get the order. The key is always the motive of our hearts.

Should we always ask for the "order" when we present the gospel to someone? Read Romans 10:1-15 and discuss.

### Persuasion

Persuasion can take many forms. Let's do a brief survey of the Scriptures.

*Leader: Ask someone to read Acts 26:1-27 and then read verse 28-29 in left panel and say aloud and mark **persuade.***

Paul rarely missed an opportunity to share the gospel. In this instance he witnesses to King Agrippa and almost persuaded him to believe. The Greek word translated **persuade** means to induce one by words to believe, to cause belief in a thing. In this instance persuasion is a positive thing.

Acts 26:28-29

28 And Agrippa [replied] to Paul, "In

a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian."

29 And Paul [said,] "I would to God, that whether in a short or long time, not only you, but also all who hear me this day, might become such as I am, except for these chains."

#### Galatians 5:7-8

7 You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth?

8 This persuasion [did] not [come] from Him who calls you.

9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump [of dough].

#### 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

1 And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God.

2 For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

3 And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.

4 And my message and my

Now let's look at another verse. *Leader: Read Galatians 5:7-8 and say aloud and mark **persuasion**.*

Here Paul is rebuking the church for falling back into legalism, exhibited here by adding circumcision as a requirement. The Greek word translated **persuasion** has the same root as the other word translated persuade, but in this context means treacherous and deceptive persuasion, clearly a bad thing.

*Leader: Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 and say aloud and mark **superiority of speech and persuasive words**.*

Why did Paul refrain from persuasive words?

But didn't he try to persuade Agrippa to believe? Is there a difference between persuasive facts and persuasive style? Explain your answer.

Zig Ziglar draws an interesting distinction on this point. He observes that **emotion-driven** sales decisions are different than **logic-driven** decisions. The emotion-driven approach might result in more closes and a shorter sales cycle, but they may also result in buyer's remorse and the eventual loss of the sale. On the other hand, the logic-driven approach may take longer, but these sales stick. How does this relate to our study of persuasive closing tactics?

He also makes an interesting point about overcoming objections. He states that customers who say no are not going to change their minds and buy from you. But what about the statistics that says 60% of the sales in some industries occur after the prospect customer has said no five times? He explains that "your prospects, however, will make a new decision based on new information. You see, when prospects say no, the successful sales professional understands that the "no" must mean the prospects don't know enough to make the "yes" decision. Never argue with them. Just understand that you haven't finished your job, and accept the responsibility for providing the information needed." (Ziglar)

preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,  
 5 that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

**Proverbs**

10:20 The tongue of the righteous is [as] choice silver, The heart of the wicked is [worth] little.

10:31 The mouth of the righteous flows with wisdom, But the perverted tongue will be cut out.

10:32 The lips of the righteous bring forth what is acceptable, But the mouth of the wicked, what is perverted.

15:7 The lips of the wise spread knowledge, But the hearts of fools are not so.

16:21 The wise in heart will be called discerning, And sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness.

16:22 Understanding is a fountain of life to him who has it, But the discipline of fools is folly.

Now that we understand the difference between “good” persuasion and “bad” persuasion, let’s dig around again in Proverbs.

*Leader: Read these selected verses beginning with 10:20 through 25:11.*

Summarize these statements of truth and wisdom into “good persuasion” principles for Christian sales people.

Principle	Application

*Leader: Have group read aloud the entire book of Philemon.*

Discuss and list the persuasive techniques that Paul used in this letter.

16:23 The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, And adds persuasiveness to his lips.

16:24 Pleasant words are a honeycomb, Sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

24:26 He kisses the lips Who gives a right answer.

25:11 [Like] apples of gold in settings of silver Is a word spoken in right circumstances.

## SUMMARY

Is sales an honorable profession for a Christian? The answer is yes, if done with the heart of Christ and the skill of a professional, tempered and guided by the Word of God.

Zig Ziglar put it this way: "There is virtually nothing on earth that brings as much personal satisfaction and gratification as being able to save another human being a considerable amount of time, money, frustration, and/or anxiety because of the goods, products or services that you have to offer."

The apostle Paul, writing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, put it this way: "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve." Colossians 3:23.

Selling "heartily, as for the Lord rather than men" means selling with passion and skill in accordance with the Lord's instructions from His Word, selling with His interests and the interests of others in mind, selling for His eternal reward more than the world's temporary rewards.

Now that will bring true personal satisfaction and gratification!

## Appendix A

<b>Selling 101</b> Zig Ziglar	<b>Why Leave \$100,000 on the Table?</b> Mark Bonkiewicz	<b>SPIN Selling</b> Neil Rackham
<i>Don't persuade by telling, persuade by asking.</i>	<i>Transition from peddler (sales rep) to consultant.</i>	<i>Research-based method for larger sales.</i>
<b>Process</b>		
	<b>Preliminaries:</b> Warm-up, transition from personal to business, big picture, client commitment (walk away point).	<b>Warming up events</b>
<b>Need Analysis</b> You do not invent or create needs. That's not selling. You uncover a need or problem that is already there and, in the process, render a solution, a real service. How? Ask <b>questions</b> .	<b>Need Analysis</b> Help buyer define their needs, objectives and criteria for making decisions. Ask <b>questions</b> .	<b>Investigating</b> Successful sellers put their main effort here. SPIN acronym for <b>questions</b> : <b>S</b> ituation questions, <b>P</b> roblem questions, <b>I</b> mplication questions, <b>N</b> eed-payoff questions.
<b>Need Awareness</b> Verify your analysis and make sure the prospect understands.	<b>Re-commitment</b> Verify that your prospect has given you all of their criteria for buying your product or service, and that they will sign a contract if you meet their needs at an acceptable investment.	
<b>Need Solution</b> Stop asking questions and present your solution to their needs, staying focused on customer benefits not product features.	<b>Demonstration</b> Deliver a confident, enthusiastic, customized demonstration that focuses on solving the needs identified earlier.	<b>Demonstrate Capability</b> Show customers you have a solution and that it makes a worthwhile contribution to helping them solve their problems.
<b>Need Satisfaction</b> If you truly have a desire to help other people; if you truly believe in your product or service; if you truly want the prospect to benefit; if you truly want to benefit from your hard work and effort; then you must <b>Always Ask For The Order</b> .	<b>Customized Close</b> Summarize all that the buyer will receive from the product/service as written in your proposal, contract or letter of intent. Hand them your pen and ask a contract-closing question.	<b>Obtaining Commitment</b> A successful sales call will end with some sort of commitment from the customer. Avoid classic closing techniques.

# The Five Key Elements to Nonverbal Communication in Business

By Lee Hopkins

## Nonverbal communication in business

### There are five key elements...

...that can make or break your attempt at successful non-verbal business communication:

- Eye contact
- Gestures
- Movement
- Posture, and
- Written communication

Let's examine each nonverbal element in turn to see how we can maximize your potential to communicate effectively...

### Eye contact

Good eye contact helps your audience develop trust in you, thereby helping you and your message appear credible. Poor eye contact does exactly the opposite.

### So what IS 'good' eye contact?

People rely on visual clues to help them decide on whether to attend to a message or not. If they find that someone isn't 'looking' at them when they are being spoken to, they feel uneasy.

So it is a wise business communicator that makes a point of attempting to engage every member of the audience by looking at them.

Now, this is of course easy if the audience is just a handful of people, but in an auditorium it can be a much harder task. So balance your time between these three areas:

- slowly scanning the entire audience,
- focusing on particular areas of your audience (perhaps looking at the wall between two heads if you are still intimidated by public speaking), and
- looking at individual members of the audience for about five seconds per person.

Looking at individual members of a large group can be 'tricky' to get right at first.

Equally, it can be a fine balancing act if your audience comprises of just one or two members—spend too much time looking them in the eyes and they will feel intimidated, stared at, 'hunted down'.

So here's a useful tip: break your eye-to-eye contact down to four or five second chunks.

That is, look at the other person in blocks that last four to five seconds, then look away. That way they won't feel intimidated.

Practice this timing yourself, away from others. Just look at a spot on the wall, count to five, then look away. With practice you will be able to develop a 'feel' for how long you have been looking into your audience member's eyes and intuitively know when to look away and focus on another person or object.



When focusing on individual members in a large meeting or auditorium, try and geographically spread your attention throughout the room. That is, don't just focus your personal gaze (as distinct from when you are scanning the room or looking at sections of the room) on selected individuals from just one part of the room. Unless you are specifically looking to interact with a particular person at that moment of your presentation, select your individual eye-contact audience members from the whole room.

## **Gestures**

Most of us, when talking with our friends, use our hands and face to help us describe an event or object—powerful nonverbal aids.

We wave our arms about, turn our hands this way and that, roll our eyes, raise our eyebrows, and smile or frown.

Yet many of us also, when presenting to others in a more formal setting, 'clam up'.

Our audience of friends is no different from our business audience—they *all* rely on our face and hands (and sometimes legs, feet and other parts of us!) to 'see' the bigger, fuller picture.

It is totally understandable that our nervousness can cause us to 'freeze up', but it is in our and our communication's best interests if we manage that nervousness, manage our fear of public speaking, and use our body to help emphasise our point.

I found that by joining a local Toastmasters International club <http://hopkins-business-communication-training.com/cgi-bin/site.pl?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.toastmastersa.org%2Fchampion%2Findex.html> I was rapidly able to learn how to 'free up my body' when presenting to others.

## **Movement**

Ever watch great presenters in action—men and women who are alone on the stage yet make us laugh, cry and be swept along by their words and enthusiasm?

Watch them carefully and you'll note that they don't stand rigidly in one spot. No, they bounce and run and stroll and glide all around the stage.

### **Why do they do that?**

Because they know that we human beings, men in particular, are drawn to movement.

As part of man's genetic heritage we are programmed to pay attention to movement. We instantly notice it, whether we want to or not, assessing the movement for any hint of a threat to us.

This, of course, helps explain why many men are drawn to the TV and seem transfixed by it. It also helps explain why men in particular are almost 'glued' to the TV when there is any sport on. All that movement!

But to get back to the stage and you on it... ensure that any movement you make is meaningful and not just nervous fidgetting, like rocking back and forth on your heels or moving two steps forward and back, or side to side.

This is 'nervous movement' and your nervousness will transmit itself to your audience, significantly diluting the potency of your communication and message.

So move about the stage when you can—not just to keep the men in the audience happy, but to help emphasise your message!

## **Posture**

There are two kinds of 'posture' and it is the wise communicator that manages and utilizes both.

### **Posture 1**

The first type of 'posture' is the one we think of intuitively—the straight back versus the slumped shoulders; the feet-apart confident stance versus the feet together, hand-wringing of the nervous; the head up and smiling versus the head down and frowning.

And every one of the positions we place the various elements of our body in tells a story—a powerful, nonverbal story.

For example, stand upright, shoulders straight, head up and eyes facing the front. Wear a big smile. Notice how you 'feel' emotionally.

Now—slump your shoulders, look at the floor and slightly shuffle your feet. Again, take a note of your emotional state.

Notice the difference?

Your audience surely will, and react to you and your message accordingly.

A strong, upright, positive body posture not only helps you breath easier (good for helping to calm nerves!) but also transmits a message of authority, confidence, trust and power.

If you find yourself challenged to maintain such a posture, practice in front of a mirror, or better yet join a speaking club like Toastmasters International.

### **Posture 2**

The second type of 'posture' comes from your internal mental and emotional states.

You can have great body posture but without internal mental and emotional posture your words will sound hollow to your audience.

For example, the used car salesman at 'Dodgy Brothers Motors' might have great body posture and greet you with a firm handshake, a steady gaze and a friendly smile. But if in his heart he is seeing you as just another sucker then sooner or later his internal conflict between what he says and what he really thinks will cause him to 'trip up'.

His body will start betraying his real, underlying intentions and you'll start to feel uncomfortable around him, even if you can't figure out why.

But, if that same used car salesman had a genuine desire to help you find the right car for you, and he puts your needs before his own, then his words and actions will remain congruent (in harmony) with his underlying intentions and you will trust him, even though you might not be able to identify why.

I have seen some supposed 'self help' gurus who don't actually practice what they preach. Consequently their words ring hollow to me and their books, cds, dvds and training materials remain unpurchased.

I have met salesmen and women who don't actually make the money they claim to make in their 'fabulous business opportunity', and while their words are practiced and polished, and their body posture is 'perfect', their words ooze like honeyed poison from their lips and I remain unconvinced.

This second type of 'posture' is fundamentally tied to truth and honesty. It is about 'walking the talk' and being who you say you are.

It's about not trying to sell something you don't believe in or use yourself. It's about not trying to pass yourself off as an expert when all you've ever done is read a book on the subject.

It's all about making sure that your words and your intentions are underpinned by truth and honesty. Because all of us, no matter how polished a presenter we might be, are at the mercy of our body and its ability to 'tell the truth' in spite of what our lips might utter. **Nonverbal clues rule!**

### **Written communication**

I could spend a lifetime writing about the art of written communication.

There is an art (and also a science) that can be learnt with diligence and practice. To write too formally; to write too informally; to write too briefly; to write too lengthily...

My first suggestion would be to avail yourself of one of the following three books, each of which is absolutely brilliant at giving you the skills and insights into effective business writing:

- [The Business Style Handbook: An A-to-Z Guide for Writing on the Job with Tips from Communications Experts at the Fortune 500](#) by Helen Cunningham and Brenda Greene
- [The Elements of Business Writing: A Guide to Writing Clear, Concise Letters, Memos, Reports, Proposals, and Other Business Documents](#) by Gary Blake and Robert W. Bly
- [Effective Business Writing: Strategies, Suggestions and Examples](#) by Maryann V. Piotrowski

From persuasive memos to complaint letters, sales letters to executive summaries—these exceedingly useful guides help you to write clearly and in an appropriate format, style and tone. Each book has numerous examples that show how to overcome writer's block, organize messages for maximum impact, achieve an easy-to-read style, find an efficient writing system and much more.

### **But, if you want my personal recommendation...**

...if you want to get hold and devour my **personal best** recommendation, then it's this book by Ken Evoy: [Make Your Words Sell](#). "Stunning" is the only way to describe it!

### **In conclusion...**

There are five key elements that can make or break your attempt at successful nonverbal business communication:

- Eye contact
- Gestures
- Movement
- Posture, and
- Written communication

Nonverbal communication in a business setting requires not only recognition of these elements, but confidence in meeting their challenges.

## BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES DISCOVERED

- Christian sales professionals must have both the **heart of Christ** and **skillful hands**.
- The heart of a Christian sales professional does not merely look out for his own legitimate interests, but also **looks out for the interests of others** with the same attitude that Christ has towards us. He sees a person, not a prospect, an opportunity to serve, not an opportunity to profit.
- The **skill** of a Christian sales professional must be **exercised in accordance with God's Word**. In other words, it is right and proper to seek training in sales techniques and methods, but not everything taught in today's business schools and sales seminars is right and proper according to God's standard of righteousness.
- **Communication skills** are the key to sales:
  - Make sure you understand (listening skills, use of questions)
  - Make sure you are understood (method, style and content)
  - Make all the truth known.
  - "Good persuasion" motivates a person to make a wise and informed decision that is in their best interests using facts and logic.
  - "Bad persuasion" manipulates a person to make the decision that is in your best interests using emotional and other high pressure techniques.

## BUSINESS APPLICATION

1. What kind of sales person are you? Do you have an "evil eye" or do you have the "heart of Christ?" How would your customers answer that question? How would those prospects who didn't become customers answer that question?
2. Are you a skillful sales person? Do you need training? Do you need to "unlearn" some of the things you have been taught?
3. Maybe you aren't in a sales position per se. Do you realize that you are still a salesman? If you are a leader, you must in a sense sell your vision. If you have an idea, you must in a sense sell it to the decision makers and key influencers. Do these principles apply to this kind of selling too?
4. Relate what you have learned to evangelism.

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