How to Look and Sound More Confident (Infographic)

These quick tips will help boost your confidence in five minutes.

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Confidence is an integral part of success. Of course, there's a difference between confidence and ego, and it's important you don't develop the latter.

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So how can you look and sound *more confident*? To start, focus on body language. Keep your hands visible and don't put them in your pockets when speaking. Hiding your hands can suggest uncertainty and nerves. Also, be sure to make eye contact with the person you're speaking to and don't divert your eyes.

Related: 10 Things Confident People Don't Do

Another area to focus on is your voice. Make sure you don't mumble or shout, and instead keep your voice at a normal speaking level. The more clear you sound, the more confident you come off. That's why it's also important not to talk fast and rush your words. In fact, it's recommended to speak so slowly that it feels like a "snail's pace." When you speak slowly, you'll be more cautious of what you're saying and can make sure to avoid any "ums" or "likes."

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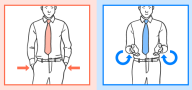
From offering a strong handshake to standing up straight, check out Pound Place's infographic below for more ways on how

to look and sounds more confident.

How to look and sound more confident

We all struggle with confidence at times, but it's key to making a good impression. Luckily, it's a skill that can be learned – and a few small changes can make a big difference. We've put together 10 easy tips you can use to immediately make yourself appear more confident.

Keep your hands visible



Don't: Put your hands in your pockets.

Do: Use your hands to make gestures with the palms facing upwards.

Why: Hiding your hands suggests uncertainty or nerves, while keeping them open conveys honesty and poise.[1]

Make eye contact



Don't: Look away when making a point.

Do: Keep natural, unawkward eye contact by alternating your gaze between the eyes and mouth.

Why: Strong eye contact is the greatest indicator of confidence, according to Lillian Glass, author of *The Body Language Advantage*.[2]

End phrases on a falling tone



Don't: End sentences with a higher pitch.

Do: Create a vocal full stop by dropping your voice at the end of the sentence.

Why: Communications expert Dr. Laura Scoble says 'upspeaking' makes you seem unsure, so saying every point like you mean it helps you assert yourself and adds finality.[3]

Project your voice



Don't: Mumble or shout.

Do: Breathe from the diaphragm and aim for slightly above your normal speaking level.

Why: Projecting your voice lets you be clear, without coming off as abrasive. Breathing from the diaphragm rather than exerting the vocal cords helps you keep it up long-term.[4]

Pose questions



Don't: Zone out while focusing on your self-consciousness.

Do: Ask insightful questions to show you're engaged and keep conversation flowing.

Why: Body language expert Lillian Glass notes the importance of being interested, not interesting, and focusing on the message being communicated rather than yourself.[5]

Speak slowly



Don't: Rush your words to get your point across.

Do: Slow to what feels like a 'coach's pace,' which will sound normal to everyone else.

Why: Vocal coach Matt Farnsworth says that we rush when we're nervous, and speaking slowly helps cut out filler (like 'um') and gets your point across more easily.[6]

Stand up straight



Don't: Make your movements stiff.

Do: Keep your shoulders back, your back straight and your head up.

Why: Good posture lets your lungs fully fill with air, lowering levels of cortisol (the stress hormone) and projecting confidence and authority.[7]

Stand away from filler phrases



Don't: Use words like 'um', 'er' and 'like.'

Do: Keep your point with precise, direct sentences.

Why: Leadership speaker Selena Rezvani explains that using clear language makes you sound more authoritative, which promotes confidence in what you're saying.[8]

Use an open, wide stance

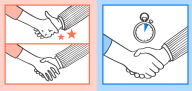


Don't: Stand with your feet too close together.

Do: Keep your feet in line with your hips and shoulders, about 10cm apart and pointing outward.

Why: Body language experts suggest that confident people have two feet planted firmly on the ground, which balances them physically and exudes confidence.[9]

Offer a strong handshake



Don't: Go for a too-strong or too-limp grip.

Do: Give a firm shake for between two to five seconds.

Why: Body language experts agree that giving a firm, but not overpowering, handshake helps you appear more self-assured.[10]



From keeping a straight posture and using open gestures to controlling the pitch and volume of your voice, making small changes to your body language and tone can help to banish those nerves. The more confident you are and appear, the more confident you'll be in yourself. So go forth and nail that presentation or meeting!

Sources

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