



**Helping individuals and companies  
break out of their comfort zones  
to become more successful**

**Training | Coaching | Speaking**  
[www.gildabonanno.com](http://www.gildabonanno.com)  
[gilda@gildabonanno.com](mailto:gilda@gildabonanno.com)  
**203-979-5117**

## **Body Language – Gestures and Movement**

When communicating, your body language (facial expressions, gestures, movement, eye contact and voice) should match your message. If there is a disconnect between what you say and your non-verbal communications, your audience will believe your non-verbals.

Movement and gestures are key components of body language. Mark Brown, past World Champion of Public Speaking, once coached me: "Gilda, stand and deliver." Rather than pacing aimlessly on stage, I should stand and deliver my message -- and move with purpose.

Try this out yourself. Before you start to speak in front of a group, no matter how small or big, walk to where you'll be standing with even, purposeful steps. Stand your ground and when you move – to the flipchart, to the other side of the room, into the audience – make it deliberate.

Here are other tips to help you use gestures and movement effectively:

### **How to Stand**

- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees relaxed. Your weight should be evenly distributed on both feet. Avoid nervous pacing or shifting from one foot to the other.
- Stand up straight - you do not need to stand like a soldier at attention, but your shoulders should be back and your head held high so you can make eye contact. This posture conveys confidence and helps you breathe more fully.
- Don't "hide" behind a desk, podium or flip chart.

### **What to Do With Your Hands**

- Begin with your hands in the "neutral position," hanging loosely at your sides, so they will be available for natural gestures
- Avoid hands in pockets since it can lead to a sloppier posture and slouching. You also may start jingling the change in your pocket without realizing it (yes, I've seen – and heard – it happen!).

**© 2008 Gilda Bonanno LLC All rights reserved**

For other issues of this newsletter, visit <http://gildabonanno.com/articles.aspx>

To receive this twice-monthly newsletter delivered to your inbox, email [gilda@gildabonanno.com](mailto:gilda@gildabonanno.com)



**Helping individuals and companies  
break out of their comfort zones  
to become more successful**

**Training | Coaching | Speaking**  
[www.gildabonanno.com](http://www.gildabonanno.com)  
[gilda@gildabonanno.com](mailto:gilda@gildabonanno.com)  
**203-979-5117**

- Empty your hands. If you must hold something (your notes or the PowerPoint remote), be aware of what you are doing. I've seen speakers unconsciously fold their notes into little squares - how's that for distracting?
- Be aware of what your empty hands are doing – "washing" each other, grasping each other tightly, playing with your watch, etc.
- Don't point at the audience. Yes, your mother was right – it's not polite to point. Try an open-handed gesture instead.

#### How to Use Gestures

- Whether they come naturally to you or you have to work at them, gestures can help communicate your ideas and a little goes a long way.
- Use a variety of smooth, deliberate and natural gestures that support and visually illustrate your message.
- Use the "fisherman gesture." Remember the fisherman telling the story "I caught a fish THIS big" with his arms open wide? That gesture is a visual clue to what his words are telling you.
- Use the "on the one hand... , on the other hand" gesture to show both sides of the issue.

Gestures and movement provide the visuals that accompany your words. Learning to use them effectively will help you convey your message with confidence and your audience will see your message instead of just hearing it.

**© 2008 Gilda Bonanno LLC All rights reserved**

For other issues of this newsletter, visit <http://gildabonanno.com/articles.aspx>  
To receive this twice-monthly newsletter delivered to your inbox, email [gilda@gildabonanno.com](mailto:gilda@gildabonanno.com)