

# Mind Your (Body) Language!

Some nuggets of wisdom garnered from a workshop for management students conducted by management guru and motivational speaker Minocher Patel.

- \* "Be goal-oriented, be ambitious. But also be humane."
- \* "Be pushy. Sell yourself. Ask for your promotion or raise, don't sit tight. But do it in a nice way."
- \* "Your technical competence can get you to a certain level, but after that along with that, you need people skills."
- \* "There's no use being a good manager and a lousy human being."
- \* "If you are rude and crude, as long as you are successful, people will bear you. But behind your back, they are not going to respect you."
- \* "You have to hustle yourself through life at times. But do that without stepping over somebody else's back."
- \* "You have to learn to take risks. The safest ships in the world, never left their ports."

...Pearls of wisdom from management guru (and Pune's own Zig Ziglar) Minocher Patel. Jotted down, and noted during a workshop he was conducting for sophomores at a management institute in Pune. Three days which turned out to be a thought-provoking, eye-opening experience. And above all, immensely enjoyable. Just the kind of reality check for cocky, managers-in-the-making.

Patel's workshops are peppered with humour. Laced with anecdotes drawn from the lives of both wheelers and dealers, as well as his own experiences. The idea behind this particular one for would-be managers being, in Patel's own words, "To fine-tune them for the corporate world."

The three-day workshop was all about *Success Skills in the Corporate World*. Divided into three modules. The first one included aspects of *self-awareness, self-analysis, confidence building, positive thinking and attitude*. "Know what you want. Plan your career," he kick-started and delved into the areas of career planning, boss management, interactions with seniors, their attitude, etc. "More often than not, your body language conveys the wrong message. From the way you stand to the way you talk - it could backfire on you and you wouldn't even know it! Remember you have a long

way to go. Don't nix it at the first base itself." (*Don't let that MBA title go to your head!*).

He further explains, "The way you stand in front of your boss when you're making a presentation or when you delegating work to your subordinates speaks volumes. The subtleties go a long way. eg. Standing with your hands in your pockets and your legs wide apart conveys aggressiveness. When you don't maintain eye contact with your boss when he is talking to you, the message going out is either you aren't confident or you have something to hide," he illustrates with a chuckle.

The second day branched out into a more formal course when Patel spoke about the finer nuances of the skill areas. *Active listening* and *non-verbal communication* were the norms of the day. "Active listening is so important. See, when you are young there are no prizes for listening, so you are not conditioned to listening," he observes, whilst stressing the need to "listen".

This apart, Patel stresses on humility being one of the keys to success. "Some of the most successful people are humble. According to feedback received about others' perception of MBAs, their biggest problem seems to be their 'attitude problem', or rather their 'worksnobbery'. Example: 'This is not my work to get that xeroxed.' Or 'I'm not supposed to be doing this.' 'That's rubbish!' he strongly avers.

The third and last module spoke about *effective interpersonal skills, time management, leadership skills, the art of self-presentation* and touched the delicate aspects of *personal grooming*. "One needs to have the clarity of thought and the purity of intention while leading people," he states quietly. "Whenever you're confused, ask yourself this question. Then even if your decision backfires, if your intentions are clear, you can take the punch. Rusi Modi, JRD Tata had proved this time and again," he rounds off.

And yes, by day three, the workshop began on the dot of 9.30 a.m. We guess, the lesson on time management had already become an integral part of their lifestyle! Carry on Patel!!

— Corina B Manuel

