

Communicate and Network Your Way to More Success!

by Lillian D. Bjorseth

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Welcome to another issue of Communicate and Network Your Way to Success. My mission is to provide you with valuable information to help you build social capital. I also keep you up-to-date on public workshops, events and products to help you hone your skills and grow your network. Contact me directly for conference and meeting keynotes, workshops, in-house training or coaching in vital business networking, business development and communication skills, or if you would like to reproduce any part of this newsletter in your organization's print or electronic media.

Please enter lilianspeaks@duoforce.com or unmark as spam in your e-mail database to ensure you receive this newsletter. If you are unable to view it here, you may read it online at <http://duoforce.com/ldb/direct3-newsletter.htm>.

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Show Confidence Through Your Walk and Posture

No one ever has too much confidence - ego, yes, confidence no.

Do you keep in mind that your walk and posture bespeak your confidence before you begin your pitch? They influence your audience of one or one hundred to make initial decisions about your capabilities ... before you even shake hands, begin a conversation or show your first slide.

The way you stride down the hallway, across the parking lot or into a room is a powerful first clue to how you feel about yourself. Walk erect with your head held high, your shoulders back, your chest out and your stomach in. With the aura you create, you command respect without ever saying a word.

When you overdo it with a swagger or a strut, it can equate with egotism and a pompous attitude. Underdone, like when you have your back arched and your head stuck out and down, shows a lack of confidence.

When you are giving a presentation, use your walk as a form of physical punctuation. Strengthen transitions by stepping to the side, pauses by standing in place and emphasis and persuasion by moving forward as if you want to touch the audience. If your movement is unnatural or mechanical, it will detract from your presentation. Standing in

one place throughout a talk may indicate you're "frozen to the spot" by the fear of speaking.

Your posture talks, too.

Once you have walked into that meeting, office or conference and found your spot, your posture becomes a telltale sign. Remember what your mother used to tell you, "Stand up straight". You literally "make your stand" through your posture. It tells people how confident you are, how much self-esteem you have and how you want to be treated.

Taking up a reasonable amount of space equates to having power. Plant your feet about 8 to 10 inches apart with one slightly in front of the other. This allows you to easily change weight from one foot to the other. This is particularly important if you are behind a podium; you don't noticeably appear to be shifting weight (which you need to do so you don't get frozen in the "speaker" position). When you don't do it smoothly, this shifting can be distracting to the audience ... and to you when you become conscious of it.

This stance also makes you feel more comfortable, balanced and grounded, which is a plus when you undertake the arduous process of starting/maintaining a conversation. Women often think it is more ladylike to assume the first position in ballet, i.e. the inside back of your left foot rubs against the inside arch of your right foot. In reality, women who stand in this position in business look as if they might topple if given a nudge.

Avoid the fig-leaf stance.

A stance to avoid is what I term the fig leaf. In addition to having your feet close together and your hands crossed over your genital area, you may tilt your head sideways as you look up to engage in conversation. This posture almost always guarantees you a loss of respect and power before you ever say a word!

Remember how your ancestors claimed their land? Stake your property, too! Failure to stake your claim reminds me of a saying from my German heritage: "Mache dich klein." (Make yourself small.)

It's what my mom would say to me repeatedly when she viewed my eagerness to speak to everyone in sight as annoying chatter instead of a natural asset! What I am encouraging you to do instead is to "Mache dich grose." (Make yourself big!) Expand and claim your space! It's yours for the taking.

A tango instructor said it well: Stand as if you own the world. I learned this from one of my coaching clients who was taking dance lessons. Attitude plays a vital role. Think highly of yourself (you will stand taller), and the world will notice and react accordingly.

How to achieve good posture

- Stand with your back to a wall and look straight ahead. Make sure your head and your back are touching the wall. As you remain standing there for a few minutes, periodically touch your shoulders to the wall and hold for 10 seconds. This automatically makes you pull in your tummy and stick out your chest. Take a few steps away from the wall, and practice the same techniques on your own.
- Envision the John Hancock Building in Chicago, one of the tallest in the world. Now, stand up. Imagine your body is a tall, narrow building. Plant your feet 8-10 inches apart. Now, make sure your knees are directly about your feet, hips above your knees, stomach above your hips, chest above your stomach and head above your chest – such that if you took a piece of heavy string and dropped it from your

nose, it would fall between your feet. Keep this image in mind as you stand around at networking events, meetings and receptions.



Want Your Employees ... or You ... to Learn More?

Do you want your employees to learn more about the incredibly strong influence of body language and appearance in your company's success? Then have them take my "What You Say Before You Speak," an 8-hour in-depth online course filled with exercises and a final exam ... all for only \$99.95. You can get them started by clicking on the icon at www.duoforce.com. Contact me at lillianspeaks@duoforce.com for quantity discounts or if you want me to present this workshop in person. It can be condensed or expanded to fit your needs.



Ask the Business Networking Authority

Do you have questions about business networking protocol or how to network strategically? Send them to me at lillianspeaks@duoforce.com, and I'll answer as many as I can in this newsletter. Put "question for newsletter" in the subject line.

I am a Realtor in Tucson Arizona. I have attended the local chamber of commerce networking meeting once and have never returned. I found the meeting confusing and ineffective. It was set up the following way: 200 business attendees sat at round tables. Each person at the table introduced his/her business and passed cards around, and after 10 minutes we changed tables, and the same routine was repeated throughout the one-hour networking meeting. I felt the atmosphere was superficial and just aimed at getting everyone's cards passed around. I'd appreciate your thoughts.

**Hanna Neumann, GRI
Tierra Antigua Realty**

Thanks for asking, Hanna. What you experienced is a version of progressive or power networking. The goal is for people to give a short (hopefully, succinctly articulate) description of what they do along with their business card to everyone at the table. The idea is for you to meet as many people as possible in a short time and then for you to follow up with those whom you can help or think can help you. The technique has its pros and cons.

- Pros
 - You meet a lot of people in the course of a one-hour event.
 - You get to know a little, hopefully enough, to decide if you want to build a relationship with any of the people you met.
 - You get practice honing your Verbal Business Card and elevator pitch.
- Cons
 - It can be construed as superficial because of the time constraints.
 - Many, many people cannot succinctly articulate in 60 seconds what they say. (They could greatly benefit from my upcoming online course, "Create a Powerful Verbal Business Card.") I have worked the process I created with thousands of people, and it continues to amaze me how people can talk for 60 seconds without telling me *what* they do. They share *who* they are and *how* they do it, but not what. It's the "what" others are interested in and that needs to contain the benefits, i.e. the WIIFM – what's in it for me.

- As a rule, many people don't follow through, even when you have indicated an interest in what they do or asked them for more information. Perhaps, it's the superficiality of the contrived situation that helps promote that.

Most chambers of commerce offer a wide variety of activities and events. Don't judge the chamber simply on one event. Why don't you call the president or membership director, express your disappointment and ask what activities he or she recommends? We all grow through feedback.

Product Update

- I'm pleased to announce that the jam-packed, powerful and practical three-hour DVD/workbook set, *Marketing Boot Camp*, is now available at <http://www.duoforce.com/ldb/mbootcamp.htm>. **Escalate your visibility** with these leading-edge marketing and promotion techniques. Broken into tracks to fit your busy schedule and to serve as a foundation for internal programs and meetings.
- Read Jason Jacobsohn's review of my unique interactive learning system, *52 Ways to Break the Ice & Target Your Market* at <http://www.networkinginsight.com/2007/10/product-revie-1.html>. Want to purchase it? There are links in the review to help you do just that.

Our Readers Write

Dear Lillian,
 You write such amazing articles! I love them, & my coworkers enjoy reading them too. Thanks for sending them.
Lana S. Hnojsky, Accountant
Kathryn Humecki and Associates

In the Media

Click www.duoforce.com/ldb/media.htm to read Lillian's latest interviews:

- "Aging Conference Features one of the 'Great Women'". *Quincy Herald Whig*, Oct. 22, 2007.
- "Networking That Works." *Corporate & Incentive Travel*, September 2007.

About Lillian D. Bjorseth

Lillian Bjorseth helps you build a new kind of wealth - social capital - by improving your business networking, business development and communication skills. She's a Lisle IL-based professional speaker, trainer, coach, prolific author and certified DISC trainer. Contact her at lillianspeaks@duoforce.com, 630-983-5308 or visit www.duoforce.com

Did You Know ...

- A dragonfly has a life span of 24 hours.

- **A goldfish has a memory span of three seconds. (Know any humans like that?)**

... until next time

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To unsubscribe from this newsletter and all information regarding Lillian's events, send an e-mail to lilianspeaks@duoforce.com with the subject "unsubscribe." It is our ongoing commitment to communicate and network only with those who want to hear from us.