

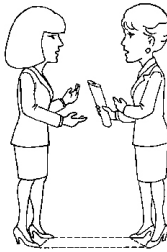


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Does Your Stance Exclude or Include Others? By Lillian D. Bjorseth

Have you ever attended a meeting, conference or networking event and felt as if people were unfriendly or snobbish and hard to engage in conversation? Are you aware you might be sending the same message when you are talking with another person ... simply through your posture?

By the way you stand, you either exclude or include others. Unfortunately, you may be unaware of the vibes you are sending about you or your organization.



When you and another person are facing each other and forming a rectangle like the illustration above, you send the message that you have “closed off” your space and do not wish to be interrupted. Usually, you do not consciously set out to do this, rather your bodies “close up the space” as you become more and more involved in your conversation.

When you are the person trying to join two people who have assumed that stance, you set yourself up for rejection if they are not yet ready to “break the box” and let you in.

I’ve tested the principle and once stood next to two people for five minutes before they invited me in. Maybe it was because they were vice presidents at AT&T ... and I was only a manager.

It also be difficult for you to break out of the rectangle if your are ready to move on and the other person is not yet finished “monopolizing” your time.

*I stopped by a funeral home to pay my regards to a friend
when her father died. She had left to run an errand so I met*



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and spoke with her sister. We moved into a rectangle position, and I tried to break it because I needed to leave for an appointment. She kept rotating with me to keep the box intact. It was apparent she was not yet ready to break off the conversation. Finally, a priest approached us and as she saw him out of her peripheral vision, she opened our "box." I excused myself shortly after I was introduced to the priest.



On the other hand, when you and another person have your feet pointed outward like two sides of an incomplete triangle (illustration above), you are inviting others into the conversation. It is easy for someone walking past or standing nearby to make eye contact. That person will feel welcome to join you, particularly if one of you extends an invitation through a smile, nod or a pause in your conversation.

Knowing these two simple "stance" facts can save you from feeling rejected or ignored or making others feel that way vs. welcomed and comfortable.

Just as you have developed your brand so do organizations and companies. "Stand up" for yours in a friendly, welcoming manner.

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Lillian Bjorseth helps you build a new kind of wealth – social capital – by improving your face-to-face networking and communication skills. She's an acclaimed speaker, trainer, coach and prolific author and certified DiSC trainer.

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