

Book Review

Allan Pease and Barbara Pease

The Definitive Book of Body Language

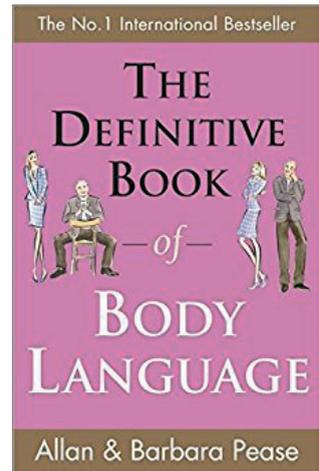
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Allan and Barbara Pease's 382-page book is structured into 19 chapters and is dedicated to all those who "have good eyesight, but cannot see". One of the most striking features of this volume is not only the extensive bibliography at the end of the book, but also the fact that it succeeds to highlight and illustrate the significance of body language through its numerous images, drawings, caricatures and, first and foremost, the authors' writing style.

The book provides deep insight into the subject of non-verbal communication: the comprehensive and well-structured introduction that details the main features and the basic concepts of this form of communication is followed by an in-depth analysis of the various types of non-verbal communication, including gestures (with emphasis on hands, arms and feet), facial expressions (eye contact and the mouth: smiling and smirking), proxemics, as well as territorial and distance behaviour. The remaining chapters map those signals that express appraisal and attraction gestures, identify cultural and gender differences, but also offer advice to those who want to exhibit an appropriate non-verbal expression at job interviews or at work. Chapters 11 and 13 are especially interesting and readworthy. In chapter 11 the authors present and describe the 13 gestures and signals that are the most frequently used in day to day communication. These include head up, head down, leg-over-the-arm-of-chair, straddling a chair or the starter's position.

Chapter 13 is dedicated to the secret signals of cigarettes, glasses and make-up. The fact that there are two types of smokers, addicted and social smokers, is stressed along with the fact that the smoking population manifests gender-specific



differences when it comes to this habit. The next chapter teaches readers how to read glasses, what the shape and size of this accessory mean, but also the meaning of make-up. Chapter 19 is entitled Putting it all together and is presented as a recap-exercise. The authors pose a series of questions and the reader can write the answer in the spaces provided below each question. The various visual elements accompanying the exercises are very helpful in finding the correct answers.

Each chapter ends with a short summary and also features key terms that are worth remembering. Some statements and quotes are highlighted by being placed in the middle of the page. These are summaries of the main ideas of the respective chapter. Some noteworthy examples: "It's how you look, when you said it, not what you actually said."; "Cultural differences are many, but the basic body language signals are the same everywhere."; "Science has proved that the more you smile, the more positive reactions others will give you." , etc.

The authors not only identify possible problems relating to non-verbal communication, but also provide numerous solutions and recommendations. The writing style facilitates easy understanding and the explanations are logical throughout the book. The images, comic strips and graphs eloquently clarify and exemplify the written parts. Images feature renowned politicians, actors and other celebrities such as Prince William, Bill Clinton, Yasser Arafat, Hugh Grant, Lady Di, Napoleon, Arnold Schwarzenegger, the Beckhams and others and have a big impact on the reader.

The conclusion sums up the most important guidelines and underlines once again the significance of non-verbal communication. The comprehensive bibliography is undoubtedly an invitation for further research into the topic. The simple, yet skillful writing style makes this book attractive not only to a small group of specialists, but also to a wider audience interested in the meaning and power of non-verbal communication.

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