

# Sit up straight and pay attention!

 By [John Boe](#)

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Several years ago, I read a fascinating article about a body language experiment that was conducted by a group of marketing students attending a major university. The experiment was designed to measure the impact, if any, of non-verbal communications on the learning process. They gathered a group of 100 student volunteers who agreed to participate in the experiment.

Unbeknownst to the professor, half of the students were told to sit up straight, unfold their arms and keep their feet planted firmly on the floor. The other students were instructed to do just the opposite. They were asked to sit back in their chairs and relax with their arms folded and legs crossed. Each student was interviewed and tested immediately following the two-hour lecture and the results were quite impressive.

Surprisingly, the group of 50 students who were told to sit up straight and paid attention, scored a remarkable 30% higher retention rate as compared to their "laid back" cohorts. In addition, they had a much more favorable impression of the professor and his teaching style.

As a commission-based sales rep, in many ways, you and the professor share a similar dilemma. The only big difference between you and the professor is that he's guaranteed a paycheck at the end of the month and you're not! Are you aware of your gestures and body position when you're with a customer? Do you monitor your customer's body language gestures throughout your presentation?

**Here are three body language tips that will help you dramatically improve your sales effectiveness.**

1. Model the body language posture you wish to receive from your customer. In other words, be mindful to sit up straight and give your customer your full and undivided attention. If you are leaning slightly forward in an open, receptive body posture, chances are very good that your customer will match your posture.
2. Maneuver your customer's body posture into a more receptive position. For example, let's say that your customer is across the table from you and is sitting back in his or her chair. Grab your favorite brochure, article or pie chart and place it on the table directly in front of you. This positioning will automatically require your customer to sit up and move forward towards the document.
3. When you select your office furniture, be sure to get the type of chairs that have a straight back. You don't want to make it too comfortable. Also, don't get a chair with rollers. It's a big mistake to let your customers roll away from you at the close table.

I encourage you to use these powerful tips during your next presentation to help your customer sit up straight and pay attention!

## ABOUT JOHN BOE

American John Boe presents a wide variety of motivational and sales-oriented keynotes and seminar programs for sales meetings and conventions. John is a recognised sales trainer and business motivational speaker with an impeccable track record in the meeting industry. For more information, go to [www.johnboe.com](http://www.johnboe.com). Free newsletter available on website.

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