Body Language Quiz

Are you skilled at reading body language? We will see. Take the quiz.

1. You have asked a suspect a question and he looks up and to the left. This might mean:
   a. He is focusing on your body language
   b. He is looking inside himself for a remembered image.
   c. He has a headache
   d. He is trying to find the light at the end of the tunnel.

2. This body language tool, when used, will make you appear warm, friendly, open and confident:
   a. Arms unfolded
   b. Feet about ten inches apart
   c. Nodding your head
   d. Smile

3. If a suspect is making little eye contact, it might mean:
   a. He is shy (or he is lying)
   b. He doesn’t want anyone to read emotion in his eyes
   c. He is sleepy
   d. He does not like you

4. If a suspect is wringing her hands as you talk, it might mean:
   a. She is nervous
   b. Her hands are dirty
   c. She is late for an appointment
   d. She is open and outgoing

5. You are talking to a suspect and you lean toward him and nod occasionally. It probably means:
   a. You are near sighted
   b. You are self-centered
   c. You are paying close attention
   d. You are having trouble hearing

6. If a suspect has her arms folded and legs crossed, it might mean:
   a. She is cold
   b. She is feeling romantic
   c. She wants to understand the person with whom she is speaking
   d. She is being defensive

7. An officers standing tall with chest out and head high, might mean:
   a. Improper training
b. Aggression
  c. Confidence
  d. A poorly fitted vest

8. **One angles in toward a person if:**
   a. He is being aggressive
   b. He thinks the other person is sexy
   c. He is trying to read emotion
   d. He thinks she is lying and wants to see if she is blinking

9. **You are talking to a suspect and she is filtering her answers through her hands. It might mean:**
   a. She is trying to hide bad breath
   b. She is lying
   c. She is self-conscious
   d. She is fearful

10. **We have such a powerful brain circuitry for the facial expression that:**
    a. We see faces where there are non (e.g., moon)
    b. We often misread expressions
    c. We get tired of reading expression
    d. We smile and glare just to confuse suspects

11. **You stop a man driving a new SUV in Nevada and his carotid artery is pumping. It might mean:**
    a. He is wanted by the FBI
    b. He has been exercising
    c. He is embarrassed
    d. He is stressed because he anticipates a speeding ticket

12. **You have asked a suspect a question and he looks up and to the right. This might mean:**
    a. He wants to appear helpful
    b. He does not understand your question and he is stalling
    c. He is trying to remember his attorney’s name
    d. He is recalling the truthful answer to your question

13. **You ask a suspect if he killed his rich maiden aunt. He says, “No, I did not.” This may mean:**
    a. He is very precise in his use of English
    b. He is grief stricken about his poor Auntie
    c. He is lying
    d. It means nothing
Scoring your test:
Give yourself one point for every correct answer.

Correct answers
1) b 2) d, 3) a, 4) a, 5) c, 6) d, 7) a, 8) b, 9) b, 10) a, 11) a, 12) c and d, 13) c
Here is more information for questions 12 and 13.

12. In both c and d he is looking inside for information stored there.

13. If a suspect uses a contraction, such as "I didn’t do it," in answer to your question, “Did you kill your aunt?” he is more likely to be telling the truth than if he were to say, “No, I did not.” Contractions seem to be more trustworthy.

What does my score mean?

Score 1 – 4
I am afraid that you might find surviving on the mean streets more challenging than other officers. You are more likely to miss a body language signal that precedes an aggressive act. Also, you are more likely to misjudge a suspect’s intention and truthfulness. You may want to learn more about body language by visiting the Non-Verbal Communication Web site; it is quite interesting. To be safe, stay close to someone who scored 10 or more on the test.

Score 5 – 8
You are doing relatively well and can probably communicate and understand body language communication with little effort. You may want to visit the reference site listed above to increase your store of knowledge. What does it mean when someone looks up and to the right while taking your picture with his/her cell phone? See, I told you there was more to learn.

Score 9 – 13
You should be working for the Secret Service. You are unusually knowledgeable about body language. This knowledge will give you a distinct advantage in understanding your fellow creatures. Let me warn you, some of the nice officers from the first scoring group are going to be looking for you.
Conclusion

Would you like to know how to consistently identify dishonesty? According to body language expert Robert Phipps, “Darting eyes, palms not visible, shifting from one foot to another, hand covering mouth or finger tugging at the ear are clues.” Regrettably, as you know these indicators are not always accurate. You should keep researching and learning about body language and lie detection. The more you know the safer you are, and in law enforcement that is your prime directive, stay safe.