Title: “You Say More Than You Think”

Author: Janine Driver

Publisher: Crown Publishers

Length: 229 pages

Price: $25.00 (hard cover)

Reading time: 4 hours

Reading rating: 8 (1=very difficult; 10=very easy)

Overall rating: 2 (1=average; 4=outstanding)

I purchased this book for in-flight reading on my way to a job interview in Utah. Like a tourist that picks up a language guide on the way to Cancun, or the executive listening to language tapes en route to a meeting in Tokyo, I was looking for a nugget or two that might help me land this job. Who knows, I might uncover a Rosetta Stone, some fragment of information that would unlock the mysteries of non-verbal communication that would propel my career to new heights. The cover seemed promising enough, “A 7-Day Plan for Using the New Body Language to Get What You Want … read and fix any situation in 7 seconds or less.”

Janine Driver draws on her experience and training as a federal law enforcement investigator (ATF), to provide a guide for readers seeking to improve their interpersonal communication skills. Driver confirms that actions do indeed speak louder than words, and provides examples where FBI agents used nonverbal clues to uncover lies, solve cases and prosecute criminals. She transfers the knowledge gained from her professional background to real-life situations and

promotes the book as a useful tool for anyone looking to improve their interpersonal skills - in the boardroom, in the bar room, or even in the bedroom.

The book is more of a body-language immersion program, as opposed to a dictionary of body signals and gestures. The author clearly cautions against trying to universally interpret non-verbal communication and she debunks a number of commonly held myths, including: 1) reading body language signals can help you read minds, 2) certain power gestures will make people respect you, and 3) liars don’t make eye contact. Driver’s book suggests a new understanding of body language that is more than the sum of its parts, it is an understanding built on accuracy, application and an attitude of confidence and respect.

The book offers a 7-Day Body Language Makeover, a simple program with daily exercises. Readers are guided through the process of establishing baseline norms prior to reading and responding to any body language cues. Observing the subject’s head, shoulders, knees and toes is a helpful tool in accurately evaluating body language and establishing rapport. The daily lessons continue with attention given to the Belly Button Rule, the Naughty Bits, the Right Side Rule, Power Gestures, and Facial Expressions. Practice exercises include field observations, journaling, video tape analysis and role-play. Some of the suggestions (e.g., belly dancing, tandem sky-diving, wearing high heels) seem impractical, and require more commitment than the this reader is willing to make.

“You Say More Than You Think” is useful, but not profound. The book does not significantly differentiate itself from scores of other self-help books that tend to over-promise and under-deliver, including other body language guides written by former law enforcement officers turned corporate consultant/tv talk show guest. I am skeptical of shortcuts and seriously doubt that the mastery of body language, or any foreign tongue, can be accomplished in just a few simple lessons, regardless of the immersion techniques that are employed.

By the way, I didn’t get the job. I wonder if it was something that I said?

Tom Collins is a professor of sport management in the College of Business at Western Carolina University. His interests include the history, governance and organizational structure of intercollegiate athletics. For previously reviewed books, visit us at our website at [www.wcu.edu/cob/](http://www.wcu.edu/cob/).