

Improv is no Joke - Episode 77 - Colin Blalock

Colin: [00:00:00] There is a muscle that flexes underneath your eyes when it's a real smile. And if that muscle isn't there, it's a fake smile. It's a smile for the camera. So if someone is smiling and telling you they enjoy what you're saying and it's a fake smile, you just need to know.

Intro: [00:00:30] Welcome to Improv is no Joke podcast, where it's all about becoming a more effective communicator by embracing the principles of improvisation. Your host is Peter Margaritis, the man whose name is pronounced like a cocktail but spelled like an inflammation. Peter is the self-proclaimed chief edutainment officer of my business, the Accidental Accountant. Peter's goal is to provide you with thought-provoking interviews with business leaders so you can become an effective improviser, which will lead to building stronger relationships with clients, customers, colleagues, and even your family. So let's start to show.

Peter: [00:01:13] Welcome to episode 77. And today my guest is Colin Blalock, who's a shareholder with the accounting firm of Jones and Kolb since 1986 located in Atlanta, Georgia. Colin's practice concentration isn't tax controversy, Entrepreneurial businesses and individuals. His prior experience includes working with the examination division of the IRS. Colin's a member of the AICPA, the Georgia society of Certified Public Accountants, and the Atlanta alumni of revenue agents. Colin is as a past president the Georgia society of CPAs and the past chair of the Gulf Coast tax exempt governmental entities IRS Advisory Council. He currently serves as a trustee of the Georgia federal tax conference. He is very active in his community serving on the board of directors of the fowler YMCA and the finance committee at his church. Colin has developed a unique but effective talent of understanding the nonverbal messages that people are saying. That's right. He has developed the ability at reading body language and has delivered a number of conference presentations on this topic. That is the topic of our discussion. And let's get to the interview! Colin first thank you for taking time out of your schedule to spend some time with me talking about this talent that you have developed over time as in reading peoples body language. So first foremost thank you for being my guest today.

Colin: [00:02:45] Well my pleasure. It's fun and it's something that I think accountants especially but all professionals need to know what's going on with their body language and what they're telling people without saying a word.

Peter: [00:02:59] Yes. Those non-verbal clues say a lot. I've known you for about what seven eight, ten years something like that. And I remember when I first met you you were telling me about this talent that you were developing and you spoke at conferences and stuff and I remember watching the TV show that was only on for a couple of years called Lie to me, and I started getting fascinated by what you had developed. And and then watching this show was which was one of the writers or the person they counseled was an FBI individual who's an expert and body language and came up these micro movements that really hint on what a person is actually saying versus the words coming out of their mouth.

Colin: [00:03:49] That's right. The program was based on a book by Paul Ekman. It was lie to me. Paul Ekman's book was Telling Lies and it's probably the hardest book I've ever tried to read but just about every book is written on body language references him and his research and what he was doing. One of the things that people ask me is how did you get started in this?

Peter: [00:04:14] Yeah that was one of my questions.

Colin: [00:04:18] Haha. Let's go there for a second to get into the body language part of it. It's about almost 14 years ago now. My wife was a schoolteacher and she was given a gift certificate. And I was waiting on her to spend her gift money and I was up at the front of the bookstore looking at the bargains sell books and I really didn't want to get a novel. I wanted something that I could just read pick up put down and there was a book there it was called The Secret Language of Success: Getting What You Want by DAVID LEWIS. And I opened it up and I read a paragraph or two and I said that's interesting. And I thumbed through the book a little bit more and how you know this is. It's different. And I decided to buy it and I did for \$4.98. And I went home and started reading it and I went in the next day and within about two minutes I said I saw that. That's in the book. And so I would limit myself to 20 pages a night and I'd go home and read 20 pages of this book and come back in and see if I could see in my office. I did not tell anybody in my firm that I was reading this book. And about a little over halfway through the book I met a potential new client. And within about 30 seconds I knew it was going to be a good meeting and I was able to put him at ease and I picked up that client. Two weeks later I met with another client that was a first client, was a male client, very reserved. The second client was a very successful female client. And I approached them differently based on this body language book I was reading. Well I have now read I think 19 books on body language.

Peter: [00:06:14] Wow.

Colin: [00:06:15] And just about every book has something different in it. I'll give you a couple of them that I'll say them now, but at the end I'll make sure people get an opportunity. The secret language of success by David Lewis you can still find on Amazon. It will cost you more to have it shipped to you than the book cost. I think it was a dollar twenty seven The last time I've looked at it but it's still a good book. And accountants love that book because there's thirty one rule. And accountants love Rules. And if you go through those 31 rules, you'll be on your way to understanding body language. There's another very good book called the definitive book of body language by Allan and Barbara Pease, and it comes up through some time in 2007. And it talks about people and what happens. It has President Clinton in there. It has a lot of the information that was in that TV program we were talking about. I love that program by the way. A lot of the program was excellent. If you are in a leadership position and if you are dealing with committees, there's an excellent book called The Silent Language of Leaders: Why Some people lead and nobody follows. It's by Carol Kinsey Goman. And it's just an excellent book. But those are three four. There's one if you're single call Let me see your body talk. It's a fun book but I'm not going to get into that one at all.

Peter: [00:07:54] Hahahaha. I've read a couple of books on body language and I think one was what everybody is saying.

Colin: [00:08:02] Yes. by Joe Navarro.

Peter: [00:08:03] Yes I think that's one of them that I've read and another-- I too like when I pick up these books I start reading and I get I get fascinated and then it's something that you can immediately apply that same day in assessing a person when they're approaching you, which I

find you know extremely fascinating. I think the hard part is developing that habit of constantly keep it in the forefront of your mind.

Colin: [00:08:28] Well, when you realize that people pay attention to the 7 percent of what you say, 38 percent of how you say it (the tone of your voice), and 55 percent of silent body language. It is what you're giving them that you're reading that you don't quite honestly most people don't even know they're reading it. The 38 percent on the tone. You can say thanks a lot or Thanks. a lot. Same words but just the tone of voice changes. But when you add that to the body language is the body language that person is presenting is in agreement with what's being said how they're saying it. I tell people quite a bit. When was the last time you've talked to somebody? And they say the right thing and they smile and you walk off and say I don't know what it is. I just don't like that individual.

Peter: [00:09:28] Hahaha.

Colin: [00:09:28] That's because their body language is not in agreement with what they're saying and how they're saying it. And you just don't feel comfortable. The other thing we need to realize is that there's different customs and the things that are used in the United States may not be used in other places. So when we're talking about body language when I'm talking about body language I'm talking about dealing with people in the U.S. with U.S. Customs. And there's some examples that we will hopefully get to the difference between the U.S. and other areas. I think Will Rogers said it best. He said never miss a good chance to shut up.

Peter: [00:10:14] Hahahaha.

Colin: [00:10:14] And if you'll just be cognizant of what people are doing, they're going to tell you where they are and tell you more than you will ever need from verbal communication.

Peter: [00:10:27] Exactly. And I think you the gentleman who did this. A lot of research in Sir Albert Mehrabian. I think that's how you pronounce his last name was basically saying that when people are when you're delivering any information they don't realize that it's a first thought or vision is your body language, and then everything else comes after that. And but I think a lot of us don't take the time to think about our own body language. I sat down for a while and we'll go down this path here. I spoke at the Georgia society CPA's annual convention and you were in the audience that day and I went up to you and said why don't you do me a favor why don't you critique me and give me some feedback after the fact. You remember that?

Colin: [00:11:14] Yes I do.

Peter: [00:11:15] Do you remember what you were thinking?

Colin: [00:11:18] Not completely. I don't know. haha

Peter: [00:11:23] Hahaha. I do. I do remember one thing that you did tell me and I share this with-- you told me that I come across very honest and.

Colin: [00:11:33] The truth plane.

Peter: [00:11:36] Yeah. And what's that. What's the truth plane?

Colin: [00:11:38] Boy yeah that was one of the things I learned two things I do remember. The truth plain is an area around your heart and when people are honest and they are passionate about something they will be they will have their hands out in front of the heart and explaining to people and saying Here I am. I'm telling you the truth. Here it is. As they get excited and if they show more excitement about a topic, their hands will raise up over their head. Now if you do that the whole time you're not going to get people to listen to you. But when you get to a point that you really wanted people to understand your hands will go up over your head. When you're sitting there telling them this is the truth. This is something you need to talk about your hands were in agreement with what you were saying. You also could tell by the way that you looked at people, you made contact. It was not that are you watching me. It was did you understand, because you were looking for feedback from them and I saw both. So all three of those things with you in your presentation.

Peter: [00:12:53] Well I I I appreciate that and thank you for it. Well before I ask that question. I didn't realize I didn't realize that-- I knew I had I just had because I was Greek and Mediterranean that I had some like big hand gestures and I've always been told that I had some big hand gestures. But I've never-- I don't remember my hands. I have to pay attention next time and I forget when my hands go a little bit higher over over my chest and over my head. Wow that was interesting. So was there anything that you saw that you what you need to improve on that?

Colin: [00:13:28] We can do that off line.

Peter: [00:13:34] Hahaha. I gave you an opportunity.

Colin: [00:13:36] Oh I know. I'm not going to shoot the messenger.

Peter: [00:13:40] Haha. So you started down this path. And like you said you've developed this talent this loved one and know I know you speak at conferences and stuff. You've already kind of sure what benefits that's come to you from being able to do this. And I assume that you're much more cognizant when you're presenting on how your body language has coming across, as well as your reading that audience because you're looking for feedback from them. And all of this is being processed in the back of your mind and it's almost like second nature to you. Correct?

Colin: [00:14:11] Well yeah. Well actually it's there all the time. You do it you just don't know you're doing it and all I'm trying to do when I'm talking to people is give them the opportunity to say hey this is the way I'm coming across. This is the way I can get my point across. This is the way I can get people to understand what I'm doing. You are talking about the presentations I had. I was invited to speak at Georgia Southern University. They had the 50th anniversary of accounting and I was the first guest lecturer and I did the body language presentation. The thing I did not know is that one of the forensic professors, one of the teachers one of the professors the taught forensics, had given his class an assignment. They had to evaluate me. What was I doing right, What was I doing wrong, What made me believable not believable? What did they think about it? He sent me 43 evaluations of my presentation. I have never had 43.

Peter: [00:15:19] Wow.

Colin: [00:15:19] And it was quite interesting and his comment was Colin, for somebody that did a really nice job, let me know and I'll give them extra credit. And if somebody really missed it, let me know because I want to find out what the deal is. And there are a couple of people that just amazing job talking about the way I was talking and the way that I did the presentation. One young lady said I noticed that he was very relaxed because he was standing around talking with people and he had his hand in his pocket. And you know I thought you know that's a pretty nice observation. I said what would have been even better is if she had noticed that the other five people I was talking with also had their hand in their pocket. And I was mirroring showing them to be accepted by the group, which is one of the things that you learn when you go through the body language. But she did pick it up that I was relaxed and I was, but I was relaxed because I was mirroring showing the people being accepted by the group.

Peter: [00:16:23] Interesting.

Colin: [00:16:26] It really as I said like you were saying the more you get into this the more interesting it gets. When I first meet somebody, I can normally tell within the first 30 seconds whether they're an introvert or an extrovert. And why does that matter? Well it matters because if they are an introvert, you're going to have to pull things out of them. If they're an extrovert you're going to have to corral back down to get him to focus on what you're doing. They haven't said a word and you already know which way you go.

Peter: [00:16:57] Hahaha. Yeah.

Colin: [00:16:57] And it's easier to manage a meeting if you know what you're doing and how you're doing it when you walk in the room.

Peter: [00:17:06] So what signals do introverts project?

Colin: [00:17:12] OK. Here's the thing and again this is general rule because there's something called an ambiavert that you can be both, like ambidextrous. I tell people to hold their hands straight out in front of them, palms up, and you look straight ahead and then look down to the left and down to the right in your hands, without moving your head just with your eye. One way will feel comfortable, One way will not. If you look to your left hand that's comfortable, you're an extrovert. If you look to your right and it's more comfortable, you're an introvert. And so when you shake hands with people and they look down that first time, you can tell whether they are an introvert or an extrovert. They haven't said a word.

Peter: [00:18:03] OK so I shake hands with my right hand. But what am I just.

Colin: [00:18:09] Just hold your hand straight out in front you palms up. When you're looking straight ahead and you look to the left you look to the right one way you feel comfortable. You know the one way it's not as comfortable.

Peter: [00:18:20] To me it's the left.

Colin: [00:18:21] The left is an extrovert. You're an extrovert.

Peter: [00:18:26] Mhm.

Colin: [00:18:26] Which I already knew that you're an extrovert. And the reason I'm saying that you're an ambiavert... I have some people that are very shy on a social level, but you put them in a business situation and they can be an extrovert. So it depends on where they are what they're doing and what's going on, whether they are an introvert or an extrovert. I was telling you about the guy that I was that I met potential client that brings up another thing and I don't know if your audience knows that you're a flasher or not.

Peter: [00:19:00] Beg your pardon? haha.

Colin: [00:19:05] Peter, you are a flasher. Can you get help? .

Peter: [00:19:11] Hahaha. Apparently I need you. Hahaha.

Colin: [00:19:14] You may need to.

Peter: [00:19:18] So how am I a flasher? haha

Colin: [00:19:22] I'm talking about eyebrow flashers.

Peter: [00:19:25] Haha.

Colin: [00:19:26] And when it's a friendly call, when you walk up to somebody and you say hi you flash your eyebrows. aAnd if it's a friendly call on their part, they will flash back. If you're mad, you don't flash. If you're uncomfortable, you don't flash. So that potential new client that I was talking to you about and I said I knew almost immediately this could be a good meeting. He flashed. I flashed.

Peter: [00:19:51] When you flash your eyebrows, is that when you raise them?

Colin: [00:19:57] Yeah, you raise your eyebrows.

Peter: [00:19:57] OK.

Colin: [00:19:58] So you're the top of your head. Your forehead furrows.

Peter: [00:20:03] So that's a flash.

Colin: [00:20:06] Now here's the thing. You've got the flashes at the right time. You need to flash within six to 10 feet. If you do it as you approach somebody, if you do it too soon, they miss it, and they don't know it's a friendly call. If you do it too late, when you're standing right in front of them and you flash, they say wait a minute did I spill something on my shirt, my pants unzipped, something happened because that's when you get that type of flash. If it's between six to 10 feet, it's a friendly call and you're accepted. And you need to flash back unless it's not friend call. I tell people if you ever go into a store to return something that you don't like and you can't find anybody to help you. You know why? You're not flashing. They go to the back and

check on inventory and want somebody else helping you. So if you want help you flash first. Then they come out talking to you and then you return your merchandise and you're OK.

Peter: [00:21:08] Oh my God it's hi my name is Pete and I'm a flasher.

Colin: [00:21:12] Yeah exactly. My momma doesn't know I'm a flasher, but I am.

Peter: [00:21:19] But I am. Oh my. I am going to keep that. I'm going to be very cognizant of that.

Colin: [00:21:25] Oh it happens all the time. It happens all the time. I went in front of a group and you know the people really really nice it was that high energy meeting. I said I was told this place was full of flashers.

Peter: [00:21:41] Hahahah.

Colin: [00:21:41] And I wasn't sure I wanted to come in and everybody there started looking around. But it's the eyebrow flash. So you know again it's just something you need to be aware of.

Peter: [00:21:55] Oh that is that's that's great. I am. I don't remember I don't know if it was you or read it in a book or somebody told me they said if you have a social event and you're talking to somebody across from me you, just glance, briefly, at their feet because the feet will tell you if they are engaged or not. If their feet are pointing directly to you that means they're engaged. If their feet are pointing either to the left or to the right, you've got to cut them loose because they want to run.

Colin: [00:22:26] They've got to run. Absolutely. That is if you're joining a group, you can tell whether you are invited into that group ... if they rotate the torso their body and they say Hi how are you, they're making small talk. You're not part of this conversation. On the other hand, if they want you to be part of it, they will step towards you and open up and you will have a triangle. And it's not saying that they don't like you they don't love you, you're just not part of that conversation. So you need to go and come back later or find somebody else who likes you. I have people walk by my office and they will say hey Colin we need to talk about such and such. I look at their feet. If their feet are going on down the hall, they are just telling me we need to talk about something, but they don't want to do it right now. If they're standing in my doorway with their feet facing me, they're saying hey we need to talk about this now. And people don't realize they're doing it.

Peter: [00:23:29] No they don't. I was actually a colleague I was talking to her and I looked down and saw her face and I said I know you need to go. So why don't we pick up this conversation a little bit later? she looked to me and said How did you know? I said your feet were point that way, your weren't pointed at me.

Colin: [00:23:47] Exactly.

Peter: [00:23:48] So you can tell her introvert or extrovert, you can tell the sincerity through flashing. And when you go to the department stores whatever we want to turn something make

sure that you're flashing six or 10 feet in front of somebody. So they will wait on you versus the other. So I got one for you. I assume that she's been in a number of with a client and the IRS agent.

Colin: [00:24:14] Oh yeah.

Peter: [00:24:15] I imagine you're sitting there assessing the agent a vast majority of the time trying and trying to get some clues or something on what they're about to ask or what their thoughts are or anything that you can describe in that manner?

Colin: [00:24:31] Well yeah the whole thing is are they buying what you're selling, or what you're saying, or are they not? Are they telling you the truth or not? But there's four or five things I tell people I'm sort of like a mosquito in a nudist colony. I don't know where to start. There's so many things that can go for at one time.

Peter: [00:24:53] Hahahaha.

Colin: [00:24:53] Here's some examples. You don't stand directly in front of-- an unknown male will not stand directly in front of an unknown male. Psychologically that's wrong. That gets back into the fight freeze or flight.

Peter: [00:25:08] Right.

Colin: [00:25:09] Now they say it doesn't, But it does. I mean it's been proven. Paul Ekman and his research, several other people. The whole thing is can I beat him, can I outrun him, or do I need to freeze and just not be there? None of those are good. So when you're talking to an unknown male, you step to the side. One side or the other. Doesn't matter. And you'll see tension go away. An unknown female, you don't want to be beside her. You want to be in front of her. Beside an unknown female is an area of trust. You've got earn that. It doesn't matter whether it's a female and a female or a male and male. If you don't know the female, it is directly across. So if you want to remove some of the tension, if I have a revenue agent and it's a female revenue agent, I sit across the table from them. If it's a male, I sit besides them. You see tension go away.

Peter: [00:26:19] Wow.

Colin: [00:26:20] It helps in communication. You haven't said a word. The second part of that is if you want to intimidate and dominate while they are sitting, you stand.

Peter: [00:26:32] Mhm. I can see that.

Colin: [00:26:33] What happens if you're in your desk and you're working at your desk or sitting in a office table or wherever a conference or table and somebody that's unknown walks in? What's the first thing you do? You stand up. And then you ask them to sit.

Peter: [00:26:50] Right.

Colin: [00:26:51] But if you're in a situation where you can stand while they're sitting, then you get into an area of intimidation, domination. Part of it it does if you or if you're telling the truth. Paul Ekman is quoted quite well in this and several other people also went on their research. There's not one thing that says aha you're doing that so you're lying. What you have to do is benchmark it. And when I say benchmark it, how did they act normally, is there a change when you get into a specific area. One of the things they will talk about is that if you ask somebody a question and they look up and to the left, they're doing memory. They're trying to recall what what you are asking them. If they are making it up they will look up into to the right and it's imagination.

Peter: [00:27:47] I've heard that I've heard that one before.

Colin: [00:27:50] Yeah. And I did this presentation at Georgia State University to their accounting class one year and my daughter who was working at Georgia State in science at the time she and her fiance came to the class. And so I walked up to another young lady in the class. It's like when your dad says where were you at 2:30 in the morning that night, and then they watch your eyes. I never looked back at my daughter. I finished my presentation. I'm on my way home. I hadn't been in my car five minutes when my phone rings and it's my wife. She said I just heard from your daughter. I said really, how's she doing? She said great. So the first thing out of her mouth is mom, has dad been reading my body language for the last eight years? And my wife said yes. She said damit I should have read the book and read the book.

Peter: [00:28:44] Hahahaha.

Colin: [00:28:45] So there's a lesson there. But again you have to you have to benchmark people. Another thing that I did not know and I found out why I'm a terrible poker player. When you lie, your eyes dilate. You can't help it.

Peter: [00:29:03] When you when you lie when or you bluff, your eyes dilated.

Colin: [00:29:10] Yeah. Your pupils get bigger and when people are looking at you they're not really looking at you trying to stare you down, they're trying to see if there is any of those micro changes, i.e. your pupils expanding. They did a study that had some really good poker players and played professionals, and the professionals just beat them like a drum like 87, 89 percent. They put glasses on the really good poker players so they couldn't see the eyes and it dropped to like 82 percent just by taking the eyes out. Another another item: if you lie, the vessels in your nose itches and you rub your nose. Somebody say well it's just allergies, but you didn't rub your nose before and we get in this area and you start rubbing your nose. It's called the Pinocchio syndrome. Former President Clinton rubbed his nose twenty six times in four minutes on the Monica Lewinsky.

Peter: [00:30:15] [in Bill Clinton vice] No I didn't call. No I did not. I rubbed at least 30 times.

Colin: [00:30:24] And then question is how do you know? it was videotaped! I counted it!

Peter: [00:30:30] Yeah.

Colin: [00:30:31] Twenty six times in four minutes. He didn't rub it afterwards. Now that's in the book with Barbara and Allan Pease, the definitive book on body language. That's just interesting, interesting stuff. And it's not what they say, it's it's how they act. The other thing that they talk about is if somebody is telling a fabrication, they will not touch things. They will not physically touch things. If people believe in what they're saying, they will touch that. The best example was the New York senator that was trying to get the firemen covered after 9/11. He was in Congress and he was talking about it was the right thing to do. He started beating on the desk saying it's the right thing to do and we need to do it and we need to do it now. He was banging the desk. He believed what he was saying. Just an example.

Peter: [00:31:22] Wow. So what about the handshakes? I've heard this. When you when you shake someone's hand, if you come in high on top then you're going to want to dominate the conversation. If you shake shaking your hands your palms are up, that means you are being subservient, per se.

Colin: [00:31:44] There are seven different handshakes. OK. And every one means something different. The hand on top is the dominant and it's not saying I will dominate the conversation it's I'm dominating you and the bigger man right. I am the man that's in charge. You're not. And everybody knows people that do that.

Peter: [00:32:05] Yes.

Colin: [00:32:06] And I don't know which of the 19 books I have to go back and look and see if your listeners are interested. There is a book that talks about how you counteract that. And there's one not so nice way and one nice. The not so nice way is when they come in on top. You come on top of them and you grab them above the wrist. You say you're not dominating this. I am. That's not the way to win friends and influence people.

Peter: [00:32:32] Right.

Colin: [00:32:34] That's just not the way to do it. The way to do it is. And I know people don't admit to watching Dancing With The Stars but this is the Dancing With The Stars move. It's something you have to practice. But you take the hand you go... as you take the hand you step in between his two feet and with your left foot and with your right foot you step to the right of him to your right. And when you end up you're going to be even in a even business handshake. And he didn't know why. But you're not he's not dominating anymore.

Peter: [00:33:17] Hm.

Colin: [00:33:17] Now it's something you have to practice.

Peter: [00:33:19] Yeah.

Colin: [00:33:20] One of my managers when they and one of our presentations is one of the schools she says let me do the handshakes. I said OK. So we got this one dominant power to counteract it. She stepped from the right foot and then she was hooked. There was no place for her to go. I said then what do you do? Well she just tucked under his arm and did a dance move and said Well now we're going to dance. I said that may do it but I doubt it. But if you practice it

you can do that. But the submissive one you know that sounds bad but it's really not. I use the missive quite a bit. I have people that come in and they're getting beat up by the IRS. They don't want me to dominate the situation. We're not into this together. they're the One that's getting beat up on. I'm here to serve. So I'd give them a submissive handshake saying hey this is a friendly call. I'm on your side. I have a banker friend. He's a former banker and he's a consultant but he was a banker and he always does the submissive handshake. And I finally got to the point when he comes up I just look at it, and he'll turn it up straight. We'll do a business shake and go from there. And he says it's just a bad habit I've gotten into. And I said no it's a good habit, you just need to know when to use it. The thumb to thumb straight ahead handshake is the business handshake. The question that I have on that is how hard they squeeze, and how many times do you go up and down with the with a handshake.

Peter: [00:34:52] OK.

Colin: [00:34:53] And I've had some women that have almost taken me to my knees saying by gosh he's going to know that I'm in this for business. And I know that. I mean you know here's my rule of thumb. Return the pressure. So if it's medium you didn't medium if it's firm and firm if it's light to light. The reason I'm saying that I have a real good friend of mine is an attorney. He has arthritis in his hands. He hates to shake hands with people, and if he gets somebody that gives him a vice grip he doesn't hear anything anybody says for the next three to five minutes because he's got tears in his eyes and his hands are hurting. So your return the handshake. You go up and down about three times and you should be done. You get out.

Peter: [00:35:37] But what if you get the person who likes to go up and down five six times?

Colin: [00:35:41] Well then you know again you relax your hand and they know that they're going to get a handle pump handle. They're not. It's not part of the deal. The scariest one that you get is and this is the limp wrist. And that's what I call. I thoroughly enjoy showing this in presentations. But I call it the dead fish.

Peter: [00:36:06] Yes.

Colin: [00:36:07] What do you do with a dead fish? Because people would really just like to rub the stuff off on their Shirtsleeve and go away. You can't do that. And my recommendation is if you get a dead fish, you got to live with it. If you're fast enough you say I'm sorry, I missed that. Grab there hand with the other hand your left hand. Put it in the right place. Shake and get out. If you can't do that, if it surprises you or you're not able to do it, realize you're going to get a dead fish at the end and be ready for it. And go ahead and react. And if enough people do it maybe that individual will start saying hey maybe there's a better way to do this. But that's another issue. Couple of other hand-shakes real quickly if it's somebody that you know, you will double touch. You'll shake their hand and you'll either pop them on the elbow or on the forearm. You don't do that on the first introductory meeting. They don't know you you're not a friend. If you really know somebody you'll shake their hands and pop a show. That's when ladies hug. You don't do those on the first meeting. It sets the wrong tone, the wrong wrong direction for the meeting.

Peter: [00:37:28] Right.

Colin: [00:37:29] It's just something that you need to need to be aware of. But you can help establish a meeting. Is it going to be combative? Are you into this together? Are you there to serve? Are you there to dominate? What do you do? And it all starts with the handshake. Right after you see them and flashed and see which way they break their eyes. Now one other thing that you do, if you want to throw somebody off, and this this is sort of fun to do and some people do it not on purpose. And some people do it on purpose. It doesn't matter whether you're talking or they are talking. In the middle of one of the sentences, cut your eyes to the left to the right. Horizontally. If you cut your eyes to the left or the right, it will take them out of their thought process, it will take them out of the conversation, and they'll say what's wrong, what's gaining on me? And they will turn and look to see what's coming. And all you did was cut your eyes. And it completely throws them off balance.

Peter: [00:38:30] Wow. That one I never knew about.

Colin: [00:38:32] Try it try it tonight. It doesn't matter who's talking. All you gotta do is cut your eyes. I do. I did a PowerPoint for my presentation and I had one of my administrative people working with me. So I went out to make sure she could read my writing and said Jodi do you have any trouble with this? Well I was going to ask you one thing. She cut her eyes. I said what's wrong. She said Did it work? I said did what work? She was on that slide show. She said I just wanted to see if it really work.

Peter: [00:39:02] Hahaha.

Colin: [00:39:02] I said yeah it really worked.

Peter: [00:39:05] Hahaha. So I will say that I have a 17 year old son and I have forgotten some of this stuff. I'm going to keep a close look. Keep a close eye on his eyes going forward.

Colin: [00:39:19] Yup. But again you've got to benchmark it right to make sure you're doing it right. The other thing I know teenagers is smile. If you smile at the right time at the right place, it makes sense. And it will encourage and help the meeting. If you smile at the wrong time it sends the wrong message.

Peter: [00:39:43] Right.

Colin: [00:39:44] If somebody is there telling you about a serious issue they have and you're smiling, that doesn't go well, and the best example is you saying a teenage boy. Sitting down with a teenage son and you're trying to explain to him something he should have done differently. And then he breaks out in that little smile.

Peter: [00:40:01] Yeah.

Colin: [00:40:01] Well what you really want to do is take a 2x4 and just pop him upside the head, and when he woke up the smile would be gone. He'd listen to you and you could go from there. When I was doing this presentation and I did the as if I was hitting somebody off of the chair and the young man come out of it where he said Mr. BLALOCK you're a golfer aren't you? I said yeah how did you know. So and you know when you talk about knocking the teenage boy off the chair, you rolled your wrists just like you do when you're driving.

Peter: [00:40:37] Hahaha.

Colin: [00:40:37] I said you know what if you keep this up you got to really good at that. Because I didn't realize I was doing that, and that was my body language.

Peter: [00:40:44] Oh wow. Wow.

Colin: [00:40:45] So yeah it's everywhere it's everywhere.

Peter: [00:40:49] It's just being aware that it's everywhere. So when you're doing a presentation, and when I talk when I talk about public speaking stuff and there's always somebody doing this. In every class I've ever been, there's always someone sitting there in the chair with their arms crossed across their chest.

Colin: [00:41:07] Yeah.

Peter: [00:41:08] Now I tell them it's one of three things the body's telling me. One I'm not buying the baloney that he's selling. Two, this is a comfortable way to sit. Or three, it's just freaking cold in this room. It's usually one of the three I tell everyone I know, but if I see the whole audience in a defensive position I've said something, I've done something, and I have to fix it.

Colin: [00:41:33] Either that or you can see your breath in the room and it really is cold. Again that's when you get back to the bench working. I've had people that I was talking with about other things and I could tell they were defensive. They say no I'm just I'm just cold. That's when you know you say we've been here for an hour and you haven't been cold until the last three minutes when we've been talking about this. Because that is a defense I don't like what you're saying I don't agree with what you're saying. Here's the question: how do you get them out of that? How do you get them back into it? It's hard to do when you've got a group, but if you're on a one on one, hand them something. I had a client of mine that was on one of the ships in Pearl Harbor. He sold insurance and he sold more insurance than anybody ever seen in my life. And he would carry a picture of his house in his suit coat pocket. And when somebody would be defensive, he said have if I ever showed you a picture of my house? And he would hold it out and then he talked about how it's out in the country and how relaxing it was whatever. Somehow he'd work it back into the conversation. But when they uncrossed their arms to look at that take that picture, they're fair game again. And he sold them.

Peter: [00:42:51] Wow.

Colin: [00:42:52] So you hand them something. The other thing is crossed legs. When they cross their ankles, they're uncomfortable. Here's the trick. Here's here's a challenge. Next time you go to the dentist, see how long it is before you cross your ankles.

Peter: [00:43:09] Within minutes of sitting in the chair.

Colin: [00:43:11] Absolutely. As soon as they pull out the sharp instrument my ankles cross.

Peter: [00:43:15] Yeah.

Colin: [00:43:17] And it's a defensive position. I was I was in a meeting or talking about a very touchy item and we got something that was really crucial to the person we were talking to. All of a sudden he crossed his ankles. And he's no longer open to the discussion. He's very defensive and we have to figure out a way around it. One other thing when I'm on the defensive the book on the secret language of leaders, when you're working with a group, watch the lips of the people in the group. If they start pressing their lips together, compressing their lips, that's anxiety. They are uncomfortable with what's being said. If the corners of the mouth go down, they're even more upset. If they start having a pursed lips like they're going to kiss somebody, it's time to stop the meeting because they want to say something so bad and they know it's going to come out so wrong. They're doing their best not to say it. So that's when you say OK guys let's take a five minute break. Check your email. Get something to drink whatever it is. And then you go and you talk to that one individual and you try to understand what area they're talking about where they are. I when I was the chair of Georgia Society of CPAs we had some really tough issues we addressed. And I had that happen to me twice. Took the break talk to the people just not saying what's wrong just padding them out. And then I went back in and I knew what the topic was, but I didn't pick that individual picked up another individual of the people that either had some concern about it or had was really in favor of it. And I say let's talk about that a little bit more. What do you think about... And I just get it started. And within about 20 seconds that individual had the problem started talking, and we got it all ironed out that rather than people walking away feeling like they were not part of the discussion they were not heard that they had concerns that wasn't addressed, it got addressed. And it was all watching the lips. It's scary.

Peter: [00:45:28] Wow. It's scary yeah. It's scary cool. It really is. And I'm going go back. I do have the book the secret language of success. I looked it up on Amazon and said you've already purchased this book back in 2011.

Colin: [00:45:45] Hahaha. So it made an impression on you I guess what you're telling me. Thanks. Hahahaha Yeah you need to read it.

Peter: [00:45:52] I need to reread it. I bought it. I remember when I saw the cover oh I remember reading that. It said back in 2011 so obviously it's been awhile. I need to go back to reread it as well as if I could ask. You said there's 19 books. If instead of you know listing them here, could you send me an e-mail with that and I'll make sure that we put that list in the show notes that if anybody wants to go in and look for him they can go to my Web site and to this episode and be able to pick those out?

Colin: [00:46:19] Yeah. What I have done there's about seven of them that I like.

Peter: [00:46:21] OK.

Colin: [00:46:22] I didn't... The other ones said the same thing. I like the way the other people said it but you know with those four or five that was talking about immediately or earlier. What I can do is I've got those five or six with a little synopsis of this is what this book is about.

Peter: [00:46:40] Oh OK.

Colin: [00:46:41] And you know if this is if this interests you you might want to look at this. The neat thing about that the secret language is access to the Thirty-One rules because they basically cover everything we've been talking about and I give people a cheat sheet, and I can send you that too.

Peter: [00:46:55] That would be great.

Colin: [00:46:57] And if you print it out front back, it will go on one page, and I tell people read that every day before you go to work for 30 days, or school wherever you go, for the next 30 days when you get up. Read that and see how many of them you see. And it will absolutely blow you away.

Peter: [00:47:16] Well I'm going to take you up on that. I am going to add to that I obviously I'm fascinated by this discussion. I'm fascinated by body language and what we are saying nonverbally and that's that's what people pick up on. And the ability to do what you have done is to understand that and turn that into a tool, and dealing with people, dealing with audiences, dealing with situations - having to come up work for it for the benefit of you organization, and what you do. I just find it extremely. And I'm like I'm overwhelmed.

Colin: [00:47:53] Well thank you. I you know I have I thoroughly enjoyed it. And I think has really helped people with it. I want to say one more. I don't know how much time we have. But the thing I was talking about earlier with my hand in my pocket and mirroring people.

Peter: [00:48:07] Right.

Colin: [00:48:08] I call it "copying people for fun and profit." One it's fun two it's profitable. And the fun... I love it when the holidays come and somebody has an open house. I will go stand at the food table and lean on the table and nibble on something. And within about four or five minutes I have two or three other people leaning on the table talking to me, and I'll turn and walk off. I can't believe it works like that but it works like that. If you're talking to a small group, guys take either hand and put it in your pocket and within about a minute or less somebody else will have their hand in the pocket and then somebody else has their hand in a pocket and you'll have two or three people with hands. Ladies normally stand with their arms crossed because it's comfortable for them, and they'll either put the right foot forward or the left foot forward. Whichever foot you put forth, the other people will put forth. That's the fun part.

Peter: [00:49:05] Hahaha.

Colin: [00:49:05] Now for profit. You go into a meeting and an individual sitting there he leans forward to say something. You lean forward to hear it. He leans back, you lean back. He puts one hand on the table, You put him on the table. When they leave the meeting they say you don't know what it is but they really did understand what I was doing. Well now I was copying you so you would accept me. But there's there's more to it than that. If you think it's important enough that you're going to lean in and tell me something, I'm going to lean in to make sure I hear it. Does that make sense?

Peter: [00:49:40] Yeah.

Colin: [00:49:41] Now if I'm leaning in and you lean back and I still stay there leaning, that can make the person uncomfortable because why are you leaning in? If he's relaxing, you relax. It makes common sense. People do it. They don't understand it. But if you do it for business, it helps the communication. I was dealing with with an IRS agent and she had an excellent point, and she leaned in to make her point. I leaned in to hear it. We started talking about it and I started explaining why I was doing what I was doing. She leaned back. There was no reason for me to stay leaned in trying to convince her. She was convinced. Once you sold, stop selling. I leaned back.

Peter: [00:50:23] Interesting.

Colin: [00:50:25] It is. It's amazing. But it's people.

Peter: [00:50:30] It's and that's the business that we're in. We're in the people business.

Colin: [00:50:34] Oh absolutely. And you got to have credibility. If you don't have credibility, it doesn't matter.

Peter: [00:50:37] Right.

Colin: [00:50:38] No matter how smart you are. If you can't communicate it, it doesn't matter.

Peter: [00:50:42] Exactly. You have to communicate in a manner that some can understand both verbally and nonverbally. That congruity.

Colin: [00:50:50] Exactly. If the nonverbal doesn't follow the verbal, they don't buy it.

Peter: [00:50:55] Right. You know what you and I could carry this conversation on probably for about an hour and a half or two hours and I'd just be sitting here being schooled the whole time, which I do thoroughly enjoy this topic, but I do want to be conscious of your time. And can't begin to thank you for spending this time with me and my audience because I mean when people listen to this they're going to have so many takeaways.

Colin: [00:51:19] Can I do one more?

Peter: [00:51:21] Of course you can! OK. It's your time. I just want to...

Colin: [00:51:25] I know but I this is one of those things is you know -- again trying to tell everything you want to cover in a short period of time. You need to put your best face forward. You know you have a good side and a bad side. Or, some of us, like us, have a bad side or worse.

Peter: [00:51:44] Hahaha.

Colin: [00:51:44] What's your good side? How do you know what your good side is? You could probably look in some pictures and you'll see some pictures she really like. And if you look closely they're all the same side. It is the greatest distance from the corner of your eye to the

corner of your mouth. Nobody's face is symmetrical. If you ran a line through the corners of your eyes and the corner of your mouth they would not be parallel. One side will get bigger one side will get smaller the side that gets bigger is your best side. How do you measure that? I found dental floss is the best way. But before you use the dental floss tonight, put it in a corner of your eye take it to the corner of your mouth and see which ones the longest. That's your best side. You want to put people on your best side. So if you're sitting down with an unknown male, don't put it on your bad side. Put him on your good side. If you're standing with a group, you want the majority of the group on your good side. If you're in a situation where you can decide or determine where you stand, stand on your own. When John Travolta first went to Hollywood, he would only about the cameras to take his picture. His profile from one side. It was his good side. And quite honestly right now I don't think John Travolta has a good side, but he has so much money he doesn't care.

Peter: [00:53:11] Yes exactly. Hahaha.

Colin: [00:53:14] But if you know what your good side is, play to your strength. The last one it when someone smiles at you, is it real or fake smile? How do you know?

Peter: [00:53:25] Crow's feet.

Colin: [00:53:26] There's a way to tell. There is a muscle that flexes underneath your eyes when it's a real smile. And if that muscle isn't there, it is a fake smile. It's a smile for the camera. So if somebody is smiling and they're telling you they enjoy what you're saying, they agree with what you're saying, and it's a fake smile, you just need to know it.

Peter: [00:53:49] The muscle under your eye...

Colin: [00:53:51] Yeah. Right. Right below your eye. The easiest way to do it is going to the mirror and smile like a smile for a camera. And then think about something that's really neat. Think about sometimes you really liked your son or think about puppies or think about something and you will see that muscle.

Peter: [00:54:10] OK.

Colin: [00:54:11] It is there.

Peter: [00:54:17] And I always said look you know when you tell a real smile it's looking if a quarter of their eyes that have crow's feet. You know when they're laughing versus that fake laugh you don't see that those wrinkles in the side of one's face near the eye.

Colin: [00:54:33] That's true on laughing. But on the smile itself, there is muscle and muscle that constricts right under the eye socket on both sides. It's there. I've been absolutely amazed seeing it.

Peter: [00:54:49] I'm going to definitely do the dental floss thing today and I'm going to check for that and for that muscle in my eye.

Colin: [00:54:57] You can always tell when you tell your spouse you're home and she says I'm glad you're here. Look see how she's smiling, and is it a fake smile.

Peter: [00:55:05] Hahaha. So does the muscle underneath both thighs does it flex itself, per se?

Colin: [00:55:13] Yes. Yes. It's part of the muscle group that makes the smile. There's about seven or eight other things that we can talk about. Glad to do that another time.

Peter: [00:55:27] Oh I'd love I'd love to have you back on for another time to talk about body language, like a little recap from this and then bring in those new items. Definitely, we will do that. We'll get to that sooner than later.

Colin: [00:55:40] Well it's fun. Like I said I will send the books and the cheat sheet. It's an interesting, interesting topic.

Peter: [00:55:52] It is it's it's it's it's it's re-invigorated me to go back and start studying this again because I know I did. After our first meeting you were talking to me about this and I've kept some of this stuff in the back of my lab and I've forgotten a lot. And I'm going to go back and start start revisiting this information because I do find it so fascinating and I do use it more when I'm doing a presentation trying to read their body language make sure my body language is in sync, but I need to use it in other business environments. We'll just go with that.

Colin: [00:56:28] Right. Yes. Right. It's fun and profitable.

Peter: [00:56:32] Yeah fun and profitable. Colin, thank you so very much. I appreciate your time. I appreciate your knowledge and I'll send you some dates maybe we can record something before the holidays and get it out first part of next year.

Colin: [00:56:47] Sounds wonderful.

Peter: [00:56:51] I would like to thank Colin again for sharing his knowledge about the importance of understanding one's body language and giving us those wonderful tips and techniques to work on and think about as we need to all better develop our ability to read those nonverbal signals. Before I close, I would like to take a moment to talk about [the first five episodes of this podcast are now qualified for CPE self-study credit](#) in the NASBA category of personal development. Those interviews are with Clarke Price, former CEO of the Ohio society of CPAs. Mike Sciortino, author of Gratitude Marketing. Tom Hood... Well you've been introduced to him and you will be introduced to him again. Ed Mendlowitz, who's a partner at Withum, Smith, and Brown. And Karl Ahlrichs, who's H.R. professional at Gregory and Appel. These episodes are located on the MACPA-BLI self-study Web site and they are mobile friendly. Create an account and purchase an episode. You can listen to them on your daily commute or while working out, or even at your desk! When you're finished, take the review and final exam on your mobile device or your computer. It's that easy. While all Improv is no Joke podcasts are available on my web site, only those purchased to the [MACPA-BLI self-study Website](#) are eligible for CPE self-study credit. This is not nano-learning - this is self-study learning. You can get detailed instructions by visiting my website at PeterMargaritis.com and clicking on the graphic: Listen, Learn, and Earn improves is no joke podcasts on my home page. I hope you enjoy this exciting and flexible new way of receiving CPE credit. And please take a

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