

Title: *Recruiters' beliefs about nonverbal behavior in the selection interview*

Author(s): Adrian Bangerter, University of Neuchâtel
Steve Binggeli, University of Lausanne
Marianne Schmid Mast, University of Neuchâtel

The interpretation of nonverbal behavior (NVB) fascinates scientists and laypersons alike. However, the former are more circumspect than the latter in mapping specific meanings to particular behaviors. The motivation to detect hidden intentions of actors may tempt laypersons into unwarranted inferences of meaning. The selection interview is such a situation, because recruiters want to find out more about applicants than applicants may want to reveal. We studied recruiters' beliefs about NVB in this situation. Eighty-four French-speaking recruiters (55% women) filled out a questionnaire exploring their beliefs about NVB in the selection interview. Several important results emerged. Recruiters believe NVB is important. Ninety-three percent attend to it in the interview. NVB is rated as less important than verbal behavior or the CV, but more important than the letter of motivation, a photo, or employer references. Recruiters believe they are expert judges of NVB. On average, they estimated themselves as more expert than their colleagues and the general population. Recruiters' experience (number of interviews) and personality (openness to experience) predicts self-perceptions of relative expertise. Recruiters also believe that applicant NVB is more a result of the applicant's personality ($M = 3.63$, five-point scale) than the interview situation ($M = 3.29$) or their own behavior ($M = 3.27$). Finally, we asked recruiters to evaluate 15