

Six Signs for Behavior Prediction

My purpose is to teach you how to decode human behavior and confidently predict what people will do in crucial, life-changing situations.

To start your training as a behavioral analyst, you first need to understand the fundamental truth of human behavior: **The one thing that you can almost always predict people to do is to act in their own best interests.** Determining what someone wants is the key to predicting their behavior. Therefore, trust is not merely a matter of morality; trust is a predictability. If you can reasonably predict what someone will do, you can usually trust them.

To evaluate this predictability without falling back on guesswork or intuition—which are wrong about half the time—you must analyze objective, observable data points. I categorize these tells into my **Six Signs for Behavior Prediction**:

- **Sign #1: Vesting** – Creating a symbiotic linkage of mutual success. You must figure out if the person believes that their success is mutually tied to yours.
- **Sign #2: Longevity** – Believing your bond will last. People treat you better and act more honorably when they believe they will be interacting with you for a long time.
- **Sign #3: Reliability** – Demonstrating competence and diligence. Does the person have the skills to do what they say (competence), and the drive to follow through (diligence)?.
- **Sign #4: Actions** – Displaying consistent patterns of positive behaviors. It is a person's actions that define them, much more than what they say or how they feel.
- **Sign #5: Language** – Creating connections with masterful communication. The language of trust relies heavily on nonjudgmental, validating statements that give others choices and show a willingness to be a resource.
- **Sign #6: Stability** – Transcending conflict with emotional accord. Does the person demonstrate emotional maturity, self-awareness, and solid social skills?.

By learning to objectively read the "tells" associated with each of these six signs, you can protect yourself from manipulators, tame the primary fear in relationships, and build bulletproof alliances with people who truly want you to succeed.

Sign #1: Vesting is defined in the book as "creating symbiotic linkage of mutual success". At its core, vesting means openly allying with someone and actively helping them to succeed because you genuinely believe that their success will ultimately benefit you.

While vesting is inspired by an individual's own self-interest, it acts essentially as an investment in another person. In the professional world, it is the single strongest animating force in teamwork, and in our personal lives, it is often present among family members and close friends. When someone decides that your success is their success, they become powerfully motivated to do whatever they can for you.

To help you objectively analyze if someone is truly vested in your success, the authors outline several observable "tells."

Positive Tells (Signs someone IS vesting in you):

- They are willing to change their work style and tempo to fit yours.
- They talk in terms of your priorities and best interests, rather than just their own.
- They actively explore other things they can do with you to expand the relationship.
- They do things with you that they'd rather not do (like taking on extra burdens to help you out).
- They call in their own favors on your behalf to assist you.
- They offer help on their own initiative, even when you don't ask for it.
- They talk you up inside your company or industry, making sure you get credit for joint accomplishments.
- They show genuine excitement when you succeed.
- They bring you into their social circle.
- They share deep secrets with you.

Negative Tells (Signs someone is NOT vesting in you):

- They pass you over for promotions or opportunities.
 - They repeatedly point out the ways you are different from them.
 - They leave you out of key meetings or communications.
 - They make a big deal out of your minor mistakes.
 - They suggest other places where you might "do better," which is often a subtle way of pushing you away.
 - Their body language seems purposely negative when you present your ideas.
 - They mention unflattering rumors about you.
 - They look at their devices or walk away while you are talking to them.
 - They are noticeably stingy with praise for you compared to how they treat others.
 - They consistently look for negatives in your thoughts and opinions.
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Sign #2: Longevity is defined in the book as "believing your bond will last". The core principle here is that time equals trust. If people believe they will be linked with you for a long time, they are highly motivated to build a reliable and positive relationship.

Even complete strangers can quickly become friends and allies if they know their fates are linked or that they will be associating with one another for an extended period. By identifying whether someone views your relationship as long-term or temporary, you can predict how honorably and diligently they will treat you.

To evaluate whether someone perceives a long-term bond with you, the authors provide a set of specific "tells."

Positive Tells (Signs they believe your relationship has Longevity):

- They ask you to participate in their own long-term goals, indicating they trust you with their future.
- They establish and pay attention to traditions that acknowledge you and your bond.
- They are enthusiastic about including you.
- They position you as someone who would be hard to replace.
- They periodically offer you rewards, recognition, or promotions.
- They give you workplace perks that signify a long-term relationship, like a generous vacation

schedule or the ability to shift your hours.

- They encourage you to expand your training, or attend seminars and conferences (especially if they pay for it), as it makes you more valuable to them over time.
- They welcome you to be a part of work-related social activities.
- They typically say “we” instead of “I” or “you” when discussing the future.
- They never seem to take you or your achievements for granted.

Negative Tells (Signs they do NOT expect a long relationship):

- They often forget your name but do not seem to care (the silent language of scorn).
- You were hired on a temporary contract, and they don't mention renewing or extending it.
- They do not try to connect with you on a personal level.
- You are the last to know about certain important issues or developments.
- They do not ask about your long-term goals.
- You aren't included in work-related social events.
- A peer employee is openly rude to you (often reflecting the broader culture's view of your disposability).

When you spot these negative tells, the authors advise caution, even if the person seems to genuinely like you—because affection is not the same thing as trust, reliability, and competence.

Sign #3: Reliability asks the essential questions: "Can this person do what they say they will? And will they?"

According to the authors, reliability is virtually synonymous with positive, predictable behavior and is composed of two critical elements:

1. **Competence:** The actual skills, knowledge, and experience required to complete a task. A lack of competence is usually a dealbreaker when trying to predict someone's success.
2. **Diligence:** The character qualities—such as drive, self-responsibility, and a strong work ethic—that turn competence into action and completion. A lack of diligence destroys reliability through absenteeism, poor productivity, and lethargy.

To accurately predict if someone is reliable, you must observe both their competence and their diligence. Here are the tells to look for:

Positive Tells (Signs someone IS reliable):

- They are genuinely confident for the obvious reason: they know what they are doing.
- They speak with specifics, being clear, concise, memorable, and motivational (C2M2).
- They are transparent about their mistakes and weaknesses, rather than hiding them or offering sad stories.
- They welcome difficulties and hard deadlines.
- They work fast, finish first, and recognize that time is money.
- They are highly inquisitive, knowing that asking questions prevents problems.

- They accept responsibility—never making excuses, though sometimes providing reasons.
- They focus on their productivity rather than watching the clock.
- They maintain comfortable, calm nonverbals even when working on hard tasks.
- They do not hold grudges or seek revenge.

Negative Tells (Signs someone is NOT reliable):

- They micromanage without actually providing real help.
 - They are purposely hard to contact.
 - They are chronically late, which is a nasty combination of lacking both diligence and competence.
 - They secretly grab credit for the work of others.
 - They have a careless physical presentation (sloppy, dirty, or messy).
 - They force others to solve the hardest problems for them.
 - They learn slowly because they don't truly care.
 - They are careless with record keeping, which is either an indicator of laziness or a great way to hide things.
 - They prefer planning far more than taking action, simply because planning is easier.
 - They do not take their mistakes seriously, or sometimes aren't even aware that they made them.
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Sign #4: Actions focuses on "displaying consistent patterns of positive behaviors".

According to the authors, actions matter more than anything else because they are the most tangible, observable, and measurable indicator of a person's character. For good or ill, your actions define you much more accurately than what you say or how you feel. While past patterns of behavior (especially over a long period) are important for defining someone's core values, the authors emphasize that current or very recent actions are usually the best predictors of present trustworthiness, because people and situations change.

To evaluate whether a person's actions signify trustworthy behavior, the book outlines several positive and negative "tells."

Positive Tells (Signs of consistent positive actions):

- They remain loyal to you even when others are irrationally critical of you, which shows a core element of character rather than just a survival instinct.
- When you ask them for details or documentation about a problem, they fulfill the request immediately instead of stalling.
- Their versions of stories never change.
- They do not participate in gossip.
- They do not complain about their families.
- They actively avoid divisive topics.
- Their work personality is essentially the same as their home personality.
- They sometimes cite moral obligations in business situations.
- Their social media is consistent with their professional life.
- They live up to what they said during the hiring process.

Negative Tells (Signs of unreliable or problematic actions):

- They are not fully transparent about their pasts, often hiding a "secret spot" or ignoring parts of their work history.
- They treat powerful people better than others.
- They have gaps or exaggerations on their résumés.
- They regard their competitors as enemies and attack them whenever possible, displaying an innately hostile need for control.
- They have a history of irregular behavior patterns in their personal lives, such as multiple feuds, divorces, or numerous failed friendships.
- You feel like you still don't really know them, even after close, prolonged contact.

Ultimately, the book warns that if a person's current actions don't match what they say or promise, you should stay away.

Sign #5: Language asks the critical question: "Does this person know how to communicate in a positive way? Or do they talk trash?"

According to the authors, language is one long "tell," making it the most transparent and easily accessible of all the signs. The language of trust fundamentally consists of verbal and nonverbal statements that are nonjudgmental and validating. Trustworthy communication is intended to empower others by giving them choices, demonstrating a willingness to be a resource, and showing a desire to vest in their success.

To evaluate whether a person communicates in a way that indicates trustworthiness, you can look for these specific "tells".

Positive Tells (Signs of the language of trust):

- They do not jump to conclusions.
- They make you feel good when they talk.
- They focus more on your similarities than your differences.
- They look at you closely and pay attention when you speak.
- They do not speak like "talking heads" on TV—meaning they don't simply argue, accuse, or pose for drama instead of having a factual discussion.
- They almost never aim to "win" arguments, understanding that once a discussion devolves into an argument with winners and losers, everyone has actually lost.
- They are clear, concise, and easy to understand.
- The moral content of their speech goes deeper than just being politically correct or having good manners.
- They talk about you more than they talk about themselves.
- They speak the same way to both the rich and the poor, showing equal respect.

Negative Tells (Signs someone is using the language of distrust):

- They use subtle forms of self-aggrandizement and bragging.
 - They try to bond with you or please you by criticizing or judging people you both know.
 - They are defensive.
 - They turn conversations into emotional debates.
 - They frequently speak in absolutes (using words like "always" or "never"), which often provoke opposition and are rarely true.
 - They tell you "not to mind" or say "don't take this personally" right before saying something cruel or hypercritical.
 - They talk too much but say too little, often relying on business buzzwords or clichés to substitute quantity for actual quality.
 - Their body language betrays their words—for example, nonverbally signaling disagreement when they should be nodding, showing internal conflict.
 - They don't know how to apologize.
 - They use psychological labels to avoid being held accountable.
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Sign #6: Stability asks: "Does this person consistently demonstrate emotional maturity, self-awareness, and social skills?"

According to the authors, a lack of emotional stability is arguably the most dangerous deficit across all six signs because it makes unstable individuals entirely unpredictable. Even if someone has good intentions, severe emotional instability—often stemming from past trauma, biochemical imbalances, excessive stress, or exhaustion—can cause them to act against their own best interests and trigger a cycle of reckless behavior. Without emotional stability as a foundation, people struggle to execute the other five signs consistently.

To evaluate a person's emotional stability, you look for specific tells:

Positive Tells (Signs of emotional stability):

- **They are deeply appreciative:** Appreciation is viewed as the purest form of love because it gives everything and asks for nothing in return.
- **They are hard to scare:** They lack free-floating anxiety, allowing them to remain on an even keel when things get difficult.
- **They are calm:** They ensure that a quiet, rational mind prevails over a noisy, chaotic one.
- **They do not look for problems:** Instead of manufacturing drama or acting out their issues with others, they focus on resolution and constructive movement.

Negative Tells (Signs of emotional instability):

- **Learned helplessness:** They rely on helplessness as a manipulative tool to avoid accountability and force others to rescue them.

- **Catastrophizing:** They routinely exaggerate their problems, getting trapped in the dissociative "freeze" condition of the fight-or-flight response.
- **Perpetual victimhood:** They project an ongoing narrative that the world is inherently unfair and that they are constant targets of malice, shielding themselves from self-reflection.
- **Sense of entitlement:** They act as though rules, boundaries, and basic courtesies do not apply to them because of their special status or perceived suffering.

You have now completed the rundown of all **Six Signs for Behavior Prediction:**

1. **Vesting**
 2. **Longevity**
 3. **Reliability**
 4. **Actions**
 5. **Language**
 6. **Stability**
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